

JPRS-NEA-93-077
21 June 1993



FOREIGN
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JPRS Report—

Near East & South Asia

19980515 003

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SPRINGFIELD, VA 22161

Near East & South Asia

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CONTENTS

21 June 1993

NEAR EAST

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Kurdish Leader Seeks Negotiation, Halt in Attacks [London AL-HAYAH 7 May]	1
Kurdish Leaders Express Concern Over Iranian Attacks [London AL-HAYAH 7 May]	1

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Fatah Lists Reasons for Not Attending Talks With Hamas [Nicosia FILASTIN AL-THAWRAH 9 May]	1
Potential Police Chief Comments on Role, Training [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 6 May]	4

ALGERIA

Germany Said Sanctuary for FIS Members [Paris L'EXPRESS 6 May]	5
Benhadj Suspected in Attacks on Civilians [LIBERTE 4 May]	5
Role of Abassi Sons in Kebir Escape [EL WATAN 8 May]	6
Overcrowded Cities; Violence, Tension Increase [EL WATAN 6 May]	7
Antiterrorist Law; Lawyers Protest Revisions [ALGER REPUBLICAIN 8 May]	8
Human Rights Situation Said Deteriorating [LIBERTE 3 May]	9
Milk Policy Criticized; New Strategies [EL WATAN 5 May]	9
Youth Group To Clean City Created [LIBERTE 2 May]	11
Port Facilities, Equipment Said Obsolete [EL WATAN 8 May]	11
Associations Offer Citizens Support Abroad [EL WATAN 6 May]	12

EGYPT

Barter Agreement Made With Ukraine [AL-AHRAM WEEKLY 29 Apr-5 May]	13
Bilateral Trade With Czech Republic Discussed [AL-AHRAM WEEKLY 29 Apr-5 May]	13
Article Argues Hala'ib's Nationality [AL-DIFA' Apr]	14
Opposition Figure Criticizes Prime Minister [AL-AHRAR 19 Apr]	17
Academic Views Social Factors Behind Extremism [AL-AHRAM WEEKLY 29 Apr-5 May]	18
Propriatization Society's Program Listed [AL-AHRAM WEEKLY 15-21 Apr]	20
Metal Detectors Installed at Tourist Sites [AL-AHRAM WEEKLY 29 Apr-5 May]	20
More Economic Revitalization Efforts Attempted	21
Alexandria Shipyard Plans [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 5 May]	21
Alexandria Bank Cancels Debt [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 8 May]	22
Egyptian-Greek Joint Venture [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 3 May]	22
Private-Sector Oil Drilling [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 4 May]	22
New Export-Import Law [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 5 May]	23
Food Companies for Sale [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 7 May]	23
Meat Prices Raised [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 13 May]	24
Asyut Experience Said Needed for Interior Ministry [London AL-MAJALLAH 4 May]	25
AL-AHRAM Chief Editor on Need for Social Programs [AL-AHRAM WEEKLY 29 Apr-5 May] ..	26

IRAQ

Indonesian Islamic Figure Defends Iraqi Position [ALIF BA' 10 Mar]	27
Turkey Called To Help Against 'Secessionist' Kurds [London AL-HAYAH 18 Apr]	28
Merchants Strongly Condemned for High Prices [AL-JUMHURIYAH 26 Apr]	28
Consumer Goods Supplied by Trade Ministry Companies [AL-IRAQ AL-IQTISADI 17 Apr]	29
Conference on Laser Applications To Be Held [ALIF BA' 21 Apr]	29
Reconstruction Achievements Enumerated by Minister [ALIF BA' 10 Mar]	30

ISRAEL

Arguments for, Against Elections in Territories Reported [YEDI'OT AHARONOT 7 May]	32
Commentary Views Military Rule in Territories [YEDI'OT AHARONOT 2 May]	34
Rapprochement With Hamas by Releasing Yasin [AL HAMISHMAR 4 Apr]	35
Golan Residents View Means To Fight Withdrawal [YEDI'OT AHARONOT 7 May]	36
Prospects for Economic Growth Assessed [YEDI'OT AHARONOT 21 May]	39
Hawk Missile Battery Doctrine in North, South [BITA'ON HEYL HA'AVIR Apr]	42

JORDAN

Minutes of Islamic Action Front Party Conference [AL-RIBAT 14 Apr]	44
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MOROCCO

Closer Ties To Madagascar Initiated [Algiers LIBERTE 9 May]	46
Steps To Ensure Honest Elections Implemented [L'OPINION 9 May]	47
Crop Exchange Program Difficulties Noted [AL-'ALAM 7 May]	47
Labor Unions Issue Statement on Arrested Members [AL-'ALAM 7 May]	48
Human Rights Committee Reports on Cases [AL-'ALAM 7 May]	48
Neglect of Mine Company Criticized [AL-'ALAM 7 May]	50

TUNISIA

PCT Leader Harmel Discusses Changes [REALITES 22 Apr]	51
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REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Afghan Arabs' Inception, Development Revealed [AL-THAWRI 15 Apr]	53
Deficit, Poor Economy Depress Riyal [London AL-HAYAH 27 Apr]	54

SOUTH ASIA

IRAN

New Border Passages To Aid in Return of Afghans [ABRAR 20 Apr]	57
Move To Prevent Further Technology Bans Reported [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 28 Apr]	57
Tractor Production Talks Held With Austrian Firm [ABRAR 21 Apr]	58
Group Formed To Study Natural Gas Sales to Europe [ABRAR 20 Apr]	58
Martyrs' Investment Company Activities Detailed [ABRAR 22 Apr]	58
Central Bank To Control All Imports [ABRAR 24 Apr]	59
New Tehran Construction Jihad Officials Named [ABRAR 27 Apr]	59
Reporters Expelled From Construction Jihad Meeting [ABRAR 21 Apr]	60
Decrease in Sistan Va Baluchestan Births Reported [ABRAR 22 Apr]	60
Measures Needed To Curb Environmental Offenders [ABRAR 22 Apr]	60
Morphine Seized in Yazd [ABRAR 26 Apr]	60
Drug Smugglers Account for 65 Percent of Prisoners [ABRAR 24 Apr]	61
Opium Seized in Qazvin Totals 3.5 Kg [ABRAR 26 Apr]	61
Industrial Installations Polluting Gachsaran [ABRAR 26 Apr]	61
Martyr Foundation Pharmacies Lack Adequate Supplies [ABRAR 21 Apr]	61

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Kurdish Leader Seeks Negotiation, Halt in Attacks

93AS0880A London *AL-HAYAH* in Arabic 7 May 93
p 6

[Article by Isma'il Zayir]

[Text] The Hague—Kurdish parties and organizations at the Hague are organizing a march to protest the bellicose actions carried out by Iranian forces inside Iraqi Kurdistan. The Kurdish organizations will present diplomatic notes to the French, British, and U.S. embassies, and the Dutch Foreign Ministry calling on them to pressure the Iranian Government to stop the massive artillery bombardment against the Penjwin and Qal'ah Dizah areas, located along the Iraqi-Iranian border.

Kurdish sources told *AL-HAYAH* that tens of thousands of civilians have been forced to migrate to interior areas to escape "the random bombardment."

Operational Iranian military sources explained that the bombardments are "preliminary preparation to pressure and compel the Iraqi Kurdish administration to undertake an action similar to the one that it took on the Turkish front," a reference to the cessation of operations mounted from Northern Iraq by the Kurdish Workers Party—under the leadership of 'Abdallah (Uglan)—against the Turkish Government.

Sami 'Abd-al-Rahman, a leader of the Kurdistan Front, called on the Iranian Government yesterday to cease military operations and to pursue a solution to its problems with Kurdish oppositionists through dialogue. He expressed the front's willingness to cooperate to achieve this goal.

The Iranian Kurdistan Democratic Party, which opposes the Iranian regime, holds positions inside Iraq.

Kurdish Leaders Express Concern Over Iranian Attacks

93AS0880B London *AL-HAYAH* in Arabic 7 May 93
p 6

[Article by (Arlit) Khuri]

[Text] Paris—The secretary-general of the oppositionist Iranian Kurdish Democratic Party, Mustafa Hijri, said that the military operations being carried out by Iranian forces against Iraqi Kurdistan aim to impede the development of democracy in the area. Hijri made this remark at a joint press conference held on 5 May with the representative of the Iraqi Kurdistan local government in France, Muhammad Sabir Isma'il, who expressed fear of synchronized Iraqi-Iranian military operations against the [Iraqi Kurdistan] area.

The press conference, held at the headquarters of the "France-Freedoms" organization, was opened by the head of the organization, Danielle Mitterand, the wife of

French President Francois Mitterrand, who pointed to "the acts of persecution suffered by the Kurdish people," and warned of "new massacres targeting the Kurds, which might generate new waves of migration."

Hijri said that the Iranian regime is persecuting Iranian Kurds by trying "to forcefully convert Sunni Kurds to the Shiite sect and denying them their national rights, for which the [Kurdish] Democratic Party has been struggling since 1945."

Since the Islamic Republic of Iran was established, Hijri said, Iranian forces have subjected the Kurds to violence, in which about 40,000 Iranian civilians and 5,000 cadres and combatants have been killed.

He added, "The Iranian regime, has persecuted not only the Iranian Kurds, but also the Iraqi Kurds' local government, which, since being formed two years ago, has faced numerous conspiracies engineered by the Iranian regime primarily to sow discord among the main Kurdish parties, and to create an atmosphere of fear and instability through murder and explosions."

Hijri said, "After these methods clearly failed, the Iranians resorted to direct military intervention and the occupation of areas inside Iraqi Kurdistan, including the Penjwin area, which resulted in a new wave of migration of residents from these areas." He said that the attacks being launched by Iranian forces against Iraqi Kurdistan are targeting areas under the alliance forces' protection and are intended to impede the development of democracy being seen by the area.

Isma'il, in his remarks, expressed a desire for the local government in Iraqi Kurdistan to establish good, neighborly, natural relations with Iran. He said, "The two parties have a common interest in overthrowing the current regime in Iraq."

Isma'il said that the Iranian forces' escalation of military operations is being accompanied by the concentrating of Iraqi forces on Kurdistan's borders, which is raising fears that the area could be subjected to synchronized Iraqi-Iranian military attacks.

He believes that there is no sound basis to Iran's claim that its military operations are justified by the presence of bases belonging to the Kurdish Workers Party, because no such bases exist in the area targeted by the bombardment.

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Fatah Lists Reasons for Not Attending Talks With Hamas

93AA0072A Nicosia *FILASTIN AL-THAWRAH*
in Arabic 9 May 93 pp 10-11

[Article: "Fatah Explains Ramifications and Reasons for Failure of Dialogue With Hamas"]

NEAR EAST

[Text] The Fatah Movement has doubts about the sincerity of the Hamas movement in agreeing to dialogue in Khartoum and elsewhere. Fatah noted that Hamas began its military action at the beginning of 1992. After limited meetings with American "experts," it changed its views—overnight—regarding the Palestinian state.

Fatah explained the circumstances and causes for the new round of discussion with Hamas to misfire. The meeting had been scheduled for Khartoum on 26 April 1993, under the auspices of the Secretariat General of the Islamic Arab People's Conference and its secretary general, Dr. Hasan al-Turabi.

The three Fatah representatives to that meeting held a press conference in Khartoum. They are:

- Abu-'Ali Shahin, member of the Occupied Territories Supreme Committee, secretary of the Gaza Strip Supervisory Committee, and member of Fatah's Revolutionary Council;
- Munir al-'Abushi, one of those responsible for operations in the occupied territories;
- 'Abd-al-Mun'im Abu-Sirdanah, from the office of chairman 'Arafat—Department of Religious Affairs

After thanking Sudan's Fatah delegation, Dr. Hasan al-Turabi, and the Secretariat General of the Islamic Arab People's Conference, he made the following statement:

We came here in accordance with an agreement by the Secretariat General of the Islamic Arab People's Conference, after several postponements by the Hamas Movement, the latest being on 20 April. Then, the official postponement of the 26 April 1993 meeting was sent in a letter from the Hamas Movement to the secretary general. This matter is documented. I, and our delegation, came to Sudan in accordance with the agreement. We were surprised that the Hamas Movement delegation was not present, or rather, that the Sudanese brothers had not been informed of any point of view, or motives, or reasons for the postponement.

We have repeatedly heard the Hamas Movement brothers condemning our position in the Fatah Movement through the media, to the effect that we did not attend the Khartoum meeting. The truth is that we did not receive an invitation to attend until 20 April and, then, the call to postpone the meeting until 26 April. The Sudanese brothers can testify to that.

We are fully aware that the brothers in the Hamas Movement do not want and do not intend to complete the dialogue in Khartoum, under Dr. Hasan al-Turabi's aegis. We know the background of that. We have explained that in detail to our brothers in the Secretariat General of the Islamic Arab People's Conference and to Dr. al-Turabi.

The brothers in the Hamas Movement demand that meetings be held in Amman, on the pretext that their leaders are located in Amman. They say, if Fatah wants

to meet in Khartoum, the Hamas delegation would be at the junior, nonresponsible leadership level, which would be unable to reach agreement with us.

We in the Fatah Movement stress that the current agreement under the aegis of Dr. Hasan al-Turabi is complete and detailed. We are certain that we will not deviate from the spirit and letter of that agreement. We in the Fatah Movement are honored to hold our meetings in Khartoum, under the patronage of the Secretariat General of the Islamic Arab People's Conference. We have no objections to implementing this agreement on the spot, since its implementation will be for the good of our community and our people in the occupied nation in the first place and, in general, for the good of the Palestinian issue.

Yesterday, we consulted with Dr. Hasan al-Turabi concerning the attendance of our delegation's chief, Nasr Yusuf, member of the Fatah Movement's Central Committee, if the Hamas movement delegation were to come to Khartoum. Dr. Hasan al-Turabi advised us that he should not come in view of the Hamas Movement delegation's absence, and the absence of any one of their delegation's members. Dr. al-Turabi received the Fatah delegation that did come to Khartoum (three members). We would now like to raise the following points:

1. We stress the need to continue the dialogue with the Hamas movement, under the auspices of Dr. Hasan al-Turabi and the Secretariat General of the Islamic Arab People's Conference.
2. We emphasize that the PLO is the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, wherever they are located in the nation or abroad. Any impairment of this representation, from any quarter whatsoever, falls within the framework of American imperialism, the Zionist settlement plot, and all the enemies of our people. This is one of the most important reasons for our dispute with the Hamas movement.
3. Our dialogue with the Hamas movement, first of all, serves the firmness of unity for which our people in the occupied territories struggle. We are earnestly striving to establish this dimension against the Zionist enemy and to rid our land of his occupation. This serves the unity of our one Palestinian goal, aimed at uprooting the occupation by every means of struggle, as stipulated in the UN Charter and other international charters, led by escalating armed struggle in the occupied territories.
4. The meeting and dialogue with the Hamas movement brothers was aimed, first of all, at supporting the independence of the Palestinian national decision, by all means, resources, and capabilities, on the basis of integrating the actions of our people wherever they may be.

In the Fatah Movement, we believe that certain games that certain countries are playing with the Hamas Movement, such as Iran for example, do not contribute to the independence of the Palestinian national decision. In the Fatah Movement, we carry out daily military clashes,

with our people's support, in accordance with our abilities on our territory. We have proved that our enemy and his lords in the White House, through the negotiations, are not striving for peace, but are working for our capitulation. We have waged an armed campaign since 1965. There will be no dispute between us and the goal of Palestinian peace on Palestinian territory, but we reject capitulation in whatever form or by whatever means. We are striving for a heroes' peace. We cannot abandon a single grain of Palestinian soil.

Palestine is our land; it is an indivisible part of the Arab nation, an indivisible part of the Islamic world. Yes, after we failed to create an 'Arab Hanoi,' we shall work to create a Palestinian Hanoi, by Palestinian means and methods.

5. We came to talk with open hearts, so that we can agree to put our differences to a discussion. We have tried for that dialogue, as our Sudanese brothers can attest. However, the Hamas movement brothers filled Gaza with fighting at the end of June 1992. At the beginning of July, they filled the walls with their slogans, which expressed their true nature and the power that supports them, a support which is no less in their emphasis in the northern strip, in Bayt Hanun, than it is in the south, in Raffah.

The slogans are as follows:

- Hamas declares that it is the legitimate and sole representative of the Palestinian people
- Hamas: We are the alternative, not a supplement to the PLO
- Hamas declares house arrest for Fatah Movement members
- Hamas declares that it, and no one else, rules the Palestinian street

Here in the dialogue in Khartoum, at the beginning of this year, in an official meeting at which Dr. Hasan al-Turabi was present, Hamas categorically rejected the statement that the PLO was the sole legitimate representative. It stressed its point of view in the communique published at that time.

Certain Zionist quarters, and certain prominent Americans, stress the rights of the Palestinian people in one way or another. Among them are those who declare that the PLO is the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and that the Palestinian people have a legitimate right to establish an independent state.

6. We are fully aware that orders issued to brothers in the Hamas movement are clear orders not to reach an agreement, that is, an agreement with Fatah. We challenge the Hamas brothers to do otherwise. Their leaders' passports testify to the quarters that issued them. We know the number of their [the passports'] years. We travel on passports that only give us limited travel. Most airport authorities will not permit us to enter their territory. They [Hamas] go to all the international airports in direct contrast to us.

7. We are well aware of the PLO's financial structure, and we are aware of the significance of the drying up of financial resources because of the Americans' arrogant and impudent decision. We have rights with regard to oil funds. We have the central Arab and Islamic issue. The drying up of assistance and the cutting off of aid only makes us revert to the killing of the intifadah and the killing of military action, in order to endorse the independent Palestinian decision, because of a handful of Americanized Arabs. We know about the spouts of gold that are set up over the head of Hamas. Doesn't Hamas know where and how it is disbursed?

8. Why "no" to Khartoum?

We in the Fatah Movement know the circumstances and ramifications of the imperialist attack against Sudan. We come here to stress Sudan's role in patronizing the dialogue out of support for Palestinian national unity and condemnation of the American attack against Sudan. We know why its "no" to Dr. Hasan al-Turabi. It is apparent that the brothers in Hamas movement are one of the branches of the Muslim Brotherhood with its international leadership. In the Islamic context, it sees Sudan as outside the world Muslim Brotherhood movement. We have read Dr. al-Runtaysi's letters to heads of state. We are aware that no letter was sent to Gen. al-Bashir. We know why criticism, slander, and rebuke is directed against us with regard to the so-called peace process. Why isn't one word—even if only faintly a rebuke—said against our Arab partners in this process. In Fatah, we are well aware why statements are made against us from Damascus, and why Hamas is received by some of the factions there.

Why is Hamas aligned with the Democratic Front (Hawatimah's branch), that leftist, Marxist organization that refuses, as do other Communist parties in the world, to abandon Marxist theory?

We can well understand Palestinian national unity, on grounds of sharing in the armed struggle against the Zionist enemies. The Hamas movement has—all along—refused to enter into this battleground. It began its military operations in early 1992, and we know the reason for this timing.

Finally, we have read, and confirmed through Dr. al-Runtaysi's statement, that he is not as concerned with Jerusalem as he is with the fate of the deportees (to Marj al-Zuhur). We support the deportees' return. We have made this issue an international issue. This is our leading position, but Jerusalem remains over all and before all. It is unacceptable that the spokesman for the Hamas deportees is only concerned with the deportees' issue and not the issue of Jerusalem.

We have also read Dr. al-Runtaysi's statements of 6 May 1993 to Hamas members, to differentiate between the good and the beyond-the-pale with regard to members of the negotiating delegation. This is a clear statement, a decision to kill some of them. This is a serious matter, very serious. We want to warn about its dangerous

NEAR EAST

consequences, because the Fatah Movement has a long arm and is capable of retaliation. We don't want the Hamas movement to become embroiled in dangerous matters like these, because it means civil strife. We ask our brothers in the Hamas Movement: Does this have anything to do with Islam?

We know the facts about the contacts between Hamas and the CIA, under cover of American diplomatic posts in Amman, Damascus, and elsewhere. After they were exposed, their justification was that the meetings were held to exonerate Hamas of the charge of terrorism. However, Muhammad Nazzal told the truth when he stated that the Hamas Movement supported the establishment of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Congratulations to the Hamas Movement, since after several meetings with CIA representatives in the region, they came out with what they had been denouncing to us.

A matter was raised and brought to attention. Only hours had passed, after the latest meeting in Amman was exposed between Ibrahim Ghawshah and Muhammad Nazzal and the CIA representatives, when they informed us of their rejection.

Potential Police Chief Comments on Role, Training

*93AA0060A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
6 May 93 p 3*

[Article by 'Ali al-Salih]

[Text] London, Occupied Jerusalem (AFP)—In a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, Faruq Amin denied having any information on his nomination to command the Palestinian police apparatus in the occupied lands under a Palestinian self-rule plan that would arise from the current peace negotiations in Washington. However, he emphasized that he held the highest rank in the Palestinian police before the intifadah.

PLO circles proposed Faruq Amin for this position long ago when the idea of a Palestinian police force was discussed, and, yesterday, Israel Radio reported that he is a candidate for the position.

On Monday, a "basic plan" was revealed for the establishment of a Palestinian police force for self-rule transition period which, according to sources in the Knesset, was offered by the Israeli delegation to the Palestinians at the peace negotiations in Washington. This was confirmed by Israeli Police Minister Moshe Shahal. The day before yesterday, Shahal expressed hope that the Palestinian police would, in the future, help combat what he termed "terrorism" in the occupied lands.

Shahal dealt with the four Palestinians who were killed by Israeli border guards last Monday evening when, according to an [Israeli] military account, they tried to penetrate a roadblock with their car in the occupied

Gaza Strip. Shahal said, "I believe that Palestinian policemen would have behaved in the same way, but I am not certain."

He said that the police have set up "various scenarios" of cooperation in the field between the Israeli and Palestinian police. He endorsed the idea of establishing joint Israeli-Palestinian patrols and traffic police units.

The radio report stated that a committee of officers in the police has recommended setting up different communications systems with common waves for use by personnel of the two police forces. It also recommended that the Palestinians be equipped only with pistols. Shahal emphasized that, if a dispute arose between the two police forces, "The Israeli police would have the last word." He added, "We recommend that all criminal cases involving Palestinian residents be handled by the Palestinians, and that security cases remain in the Israelis' jurisdiction."

Responding to Israeli settlers who threaten to open fire on the Palestinian police, Shahal said that 1,000 armed Palestinian policemen were deployed in the occupied lands before the intifadah began in December 1987.

He added, "These elements were empowered to arrest Israelis and conduct them to legations. This happened without any problem, and the (occupied) lands did not turn into an American wild west."

Amin said, "I have no official information regarding this subject. My only information comes from the newspapers. The matter is now in the hands of the politicians in Washington. Ask brother Faysal al-Husayni."

Amin said that he held the highest rank in the Palestinian police in the occupied lands before he resigned from his position in compliance with orders issued by the Unified Command of the Intifadah in March 1988.

Amin said that he now heads what is called the guard apparatus at Orient House, which is the office of Faysal al-Husayni, the chairman of the steering committee and a member of the Palestinian delegation negotiating in Jerusalem.

Palestinian sources say that a nucleus exists for a Palestinian police force. It consists of 250 guards equipped with arms. The sources say that they are guarding al-Husayni's person, office, and property, and other members of the Palestinian negotiating delegation in the occupied territories.

However, Amin denied that these guards were carrying weapons. He stressed that their only weapon is trust in God and the homeland.

He said, "Everything that is being said is no more than tendentious propaganda." He added, "We are occupied. We possess only passive means of defense, such as longing and caution." He asked, "How can we bear arms when we are under the occupation authority?"

ALGERIA

Germany Said Sanctuary for FIS Members

93AF0592B Paris *L'EXPRESS* in French
6 May 93 p 39

[Article by correspondent Lucas Delattre: "German Sanctuary"; first paragraph is *L'EXPRESS* introduction]

[Text] FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] representatives, Turkish fundamentalists, Iranian Shiites, etc. All of Islam's radical trends are represented on the other side of the Rhine. For some, it is a rear base; for others a beachhead. The authorities are worried.

Is Germany about to become the rear base of the FIS? Since the proclamation of the state of emergency in Algeria, in February 1992, close to 9,000 Algerians have applied for political asylum in Germany. An overwhelming number of these refugees belong to the "brothers" movement. They include a few leading personalities such as Rabah Kebir, the FIS spokesman abroad, and the family of Abbassi Madani, the movement leader, imprisoned in his country.

Rabah Kebir left Algeria clandestinely in August 1992. Since then, he has been living not far from Bonn, in an asylum seekers' home. Why did he seek refuge in Germany? "I feel safer here than in France," the former physics teacher who went into exile with his wife and his five children told us. Paradoxically, it was also in Germany that, prior to independence, the FLN moved its war chest, with the welcome of the German social democrats.

Today, the FIS fundamentalists enjoy the support of Germany's many Turkish Islamic movements. The Turks, Sunnis, followed by the Bosnians and Pakistanis, form the vast majority of the 2.5 million of Muslims living in Germany (3 percent of the population). The Ankara government, which appoints the imams, controls and finances a good many of the 800 or so mosques and places of worship. The largest mosque is in Cologne, which is home to one of the largest Turkish communities in the country (70,000 people). But, increasingly, independent places of worship are being set up, sponsored by fundamentalist movements.

First-generation Turkish immigrants were followers of an internalized Islam that had its roots among the people. Their sons, who often attended Koranic schools, now tend to boast of their Islamic identity. According to Udo Steinbach, head of the Oriental Studies Institute of Hamburg and one of Germany's best specialists of Islam, "it is second-generation Turks, born in Germany, who contribute to this new affirmation of Islam. Many of them wish to return to their origins. The majority of the German Turkish community, however, remains faithful to a secular and secularized Islam."

Even though they remain a minority, fundamentalists are active. They maintain contacts with all Islamic

radical trends represented in Germany. In particular with the Iranian Shiites who have a huge mosque in Hamburg. Businessmen close to Teheran (pistachio and rug merchants) form the main body of the congregation, but the mosque is also open to Sunnis. It is one of the main beachheads of the ayatollahs' regime in Europe. Through it, the Islamic Republic is trying to establish relations with Turkish fundamentalist leaders such as Imam Kaplan, who lives in Germany. Even Rabah Kebir is said to have obtained an Iranian passport recently.

Another important center, maintained by Syrians, is in Aix-la-Chapelle. Charlemagne's former capital houses a "study center" known throughout Europe for its monthly seminars (the last Saturday of each month) held on the premises of the Bilal mosque. Arab students founded the mosque during the sixties. But it is since the arrival, as master of the place, of the former leader of the Syrian Muslim Brothers, Issam al-Attar (persistently hounded by the Syrian secret service), that the place of worship has been drawing attention.

In a sensational article, the FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG even stated that there was a connection between the Islamists of Aix-la-Chapelle and the World Trade Center bombing of 26 February. These accusations were immediately denied by the mosque directors. But the main suspect in the New York bombing, Mahmoud Abou Halima, of Egyptian origin, acquired German citizenship several years ago, by marrying and living in Munich. The matter was brought to the attention of the German intelligence service, who apparently did not find anything suspicious around Aix-la-Chapelle. At present, they seem to focus their investigations in the Munich area, where an influential cell of the Muslim Brotherhood is managed by Egyptian students. It is the first time that Germany—which until now was more concerned about the activities of secular movements such as the Kurdish PKK [Workers Party of Kurdistan]—is taking a close look at the activities of Islamic radicals.

Benhadj Suspected in Attacks on Civilians

93AF0592F Algiers *LIBERTE* in French 4 May 93 p 3

[Unattributed article: "In a Subversive Tract, Ali Benhadj Ordered the Assassination of Senhadri"; first paragraph is *LIBERTE* introduction]

[Text] According to the Blida military court prosecutor, in a subversive tract, Ali Benhadj, the former number-two man of the dissolved FIS [Islamic Salvation Front], "called among other things for the assassination of civilian personalities."

The military prosecutor added that these personalities included Hafid Senhadri, assassinated last March near his home in the Garidi development of Kouba. This was one of the revelations made yesterday, the first day of the trial of Maitre Taouti Ibrahim, the lawyer of the former FIS leaders, who is "charged with smuggling a subversive

21 June 1993

NEAR EAST

tract signed by Ali Benhadj out of the Blida military jail"; the trial started Monday at the Blida military court.

As is known, a committal order against Maitre Taouti was issued last 2 February. According to the prosecution's indictment, Maitre Taouti is charged with "possession and distribution of tracts for purposes counter to the national interest," per Article 25, Paragraph 3 of the military justice code.

At the beginning of the session, the military prosecutor pled that the military court "lacked jurisdiction" because the "material" facts with which the defendant was charged took place in Algiers and because the nature of the case cannot be considered to constitute "an attempt against the State security," so that, in the prosecutor's estimation, paragraph 3 of the military justice code does not cover this case.

As for the military court, it rejected the prosecution's plea that it "lacked jurisdiction."

The defense, for its part, stated that it "was surprised" at the military prosecutor's plea, and pointed out that the decree proclaiming the state of emergency gives the military court full jurisdiction to try individuals guilty of an infraction against State security. According to the defense, which consists of 22 lawyers, including Maitre Miloud Brahimi, the offense consisting in the possession of tracts of a subversive nature was committed within the military court area, and there have been no new facts in this case to warrant a plea of lack of jurisdiction.

The Blida military prosecution did not deem it "useful" to call Ali Benhadj as a witness at Maitre Taouti's trial, because the latter admitted the facts held against him.

Ali Benhadj, the former number-two man of the dissolved FIS is involved in the case of possession and distribution of tracts of a subversive nature for which Maitre Taouti has been appearing in court since Monday morning; he will be tried by a special court, the Blida military prosecutor told the APS on Monday. Ali Benhadj, whom the Blida military court sentenced to 12 years in jail without parole last July, fell foul of Articles 1 and 4 of the antiterrorist law when he signed a tract in which he "called among other things for the assassination of civilian personalities," the military prosecutor indicated, adding that these personalities included Hafid Senhadri who was assassinated last March.

Role of Abassi Sons in Kebir Escape

93AF0610A Algiers EL WATAN in French 8 May 93
p 3

[Article by T.H. and F.M.: "Kebir Escape: Abassi Sons Implicated?"]

[Text] What role did Salmane Abassi, son of ex-FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] leader Abassi Madani, play in the spectacular escape of Rabah Kebir? There has been a lot of speculation in the months since the disappearance

of the former spokesman for the dissolved party. Several facts were clarified in the course of court proceedings on Thursday with the reading of the indictment against the perpetrators of the airport attack.

Upon the dissolution of the FIS and Kebir's arrest, Salmane Abassi took command of the movement.

Salmane contacted his maternal uncles—Tahri Djamel, Tahri Belkacem, and Tahri Mohamed, all from M'Sila—as well as Chicou Djamel, Lemouchi Fouad (physics instructor at Biskra University), Zaaf Kamel (a fugitive), and one "Abdelnacer." His purpose was to set up an organization called "El-Bakoun Ala El-Ahd," which means the "oath keepers". They all assumed responsibilities for fund raising, communication, and logistics.

The idea of escaping into exile did not strike Salmane Abassi (his real name is Salim) until several months later. Chicou Djamel, an entrepreneur by vocation and native of Medea, first learned of the plan when Salmane turned 250,000 Algerian dinars and US\$10,000 over to them and put him in charge of some work in a villa in Tigzirt (western Tizi-Ouzou). "Tahri Belkacem gave me two pistols at Bou Saada and told me to give them to Salmane, who was supposed to deliver them to Abdelkader Boudine, who lives in Tiemcen," Chicou told the magistrate at his hearing on 20 January 1993. He added that he had received an explosive device from Ikbel Abassi (age 22), another of Abassi Madani's sons, and two bombs from Belhouari Sid-Ali. Chicou asked Tahri Belkacem to purchase the weapons, so the latter purchased an 8-mm pistol obtained from Hrizi Lakhdar for 20,000 Algerian dinars.

Preparations for Rabah Kebir's escape came slowly to fruition. On orders from Salmane Abassi and Chicou Djamel, who in record time had made himself treasurer of the clandestine "El Bakoun Ala El-Ahd," Tahri Mohamed (accompanied by Salmane) took a Renault 4 to Collo, where Kebir was living. Much of the testimony regarding the Collo trip is inconsistent, with some saying it was Belkacem Tahri who accompanied Salmane and others naming Chicou Djamel. At all events, once [they arrived] in Collo, Kebir accompanied Abassi's son to Batna, where they met up with a certain Said Waldi. The latter took it on himself to transport Kebir (who by this time already had a false passport) to Maghnia, following an itinerary planned out in advance. The fugitive was accompanied by Lemouchi Fouad. At Maghnia, where Salmane had already arrived, passage to Morocco was arranged by a dentist whose identity has not been disclosed.

The car was driven by Maarif Said.

Before the magistrate, as alleged in the indictment, Said testified that the plan to arrange Kebir's escape was concocted in the apartment of Touita Ali (attorney). Lemouchi Fouad manufactured the false passports. The trip to Germany was arranged by a representative of the ex-FIS in France who traveled to Oujda for the occasion.

It is not known how Ikbel Abassi and Oussama Abassi managed to leave the country.

In addition to taking up arms against Algeria, Abassi Madani's sons are accused of 11 other crimes including membership in an illegal armed group, failure to report crimes and aggravated thefts, conspiracy to destabilize the regime, activities damaging to national security, sedition, assassination, and acts of destruction. The ex-FIS leader's three sons are now refugees in Germany. Thus they will be judged in absentia.

Overcrowded Cities; Violence, Tension Increase
93AF0610D Algiers EL WATAN in French 6 May 93
p 4

[Article by Okba Khiar: "Overcrowded Cities: Catastrophic Scenario"]

[Text] The growing imbalances between the capacity of cities, their existing infrastructure, and their population density, and rapid, disorderly expansion have created tensions, breakdowns, and a clear degradation in the quality of life for their inhabitants.

The various eruptions that have occurred since 1988 have laid bare the malaise that is affecting Algerian cities today.

While Algeria's annual demographic growth has averaged 3 percent (over the last decade), the urban population is increasing by 5 percent per year, which means doubling in less than 15 years! One is appalled at the enormity of the task of providing our urban population food, potable water, health care, sanitation, education, transport, and (more recently) security—problems that must be solved but that we know very well cannot be solved. Can we hope to rise to that challenge for the future when already urban demand so tragically exceeds any possibility of supply?

Today tens of thousands of city dwellers are already living in shantytowns, virtually condemned to stay there, subject to the vicissitudes of weather and prey to the selfishness of other men, waiting for a change that is ever and again postponed. They live in direct contact with disease, totally impoverished, with their children expelled from schools—"their only playground the public sewer, their only school the street, their only teachers older siblings who teach them the ins and outs of crime, their only qualification experience in malnutrition and privation."

What factors are responsible for this growth, or rather this "mushrooming" of shantytowns? They are two: migration and demographics; because while natural growth affects affects the total population, urban growth takes place at the expense of the rural population.

This phenomenon added to high overall growth results in very fast rates of [urban] expansion.

During the last two decades the authorities, after failing to predict, avoid, or channel increasing urbanization and demographic growth, were forced to face the fact that housing needs were immense. As this article was being prepared, we learned on television that the current government plans to build 100,000 housing units by the end of the year! One scarcely knows whether to laugh or cry, considering that as we know only 24,000 housing units were finished in 1991 in the entire country. Clearly, demagoguery is not dead.

The phenomenon of anarchic expansion and "shantyization" exists in virtually all our cities, accentuated by a development model that long neglected housing (the Ministry of Housing was finally established only in 1977) and a production plant quite insufficient to meet demand.

The destructiveness of urbanization does not strike all social classes equally: The rich can still live in spacious villas and apartments in peaceful neighborhoods or make frequent escapes to their second homes; the poor must endure the discomforts of their "concrete towns" and "shantytowns," the jostle and crush of public transport, and unemployment.

In the multidimensional crisis now at hand, the residual effects and indeed the aggravation of exclusion [from the work force] have deepened fracture lines separating the different components of Algerian society, while the climate of mutual distrust between social groups is intensified by the decline of traditional values (community spirit, solidarity, etc.).

The recent increase in the incidence of poverty—the state considers 14 million Algerians "needy"—is directly tied to the employment situation (as of the end of 1991, more than 1,265,000 were jobless), and there are no grounds for hope the situation will improve, at least in the short term, since most statistical indicators are clearly in decline, obviously as a result of the recession.

Profound Malaise

The effects of overcrowding in the big cities are already being felt. One of the most serious effects—and one that demands urgent action—is the disturbing wave of violence and tension.

Indeed, further increases in the level of violence are not out of the question. In that regard, recent statistics reported by the media are more than revealing. This violence, which has taken and may take different forms—not merely rising crime rates, but also increased susceptibility to the appeal of fanatical movements—reflects the anxiety about the future felt by the [text illegible] youth, one of the characteristics of the Algerian population.

The shantytowns and hopeless slums are breeding grounds for "all the ills endemic to poor neighborhoods: drugs, prostitution, crime.... Slum dwellers do not go out and vandalize other areas gratuitously: They are taking

symbolic vengeance." A fact that attests to the bankruptcy of the socialization process, which has failed to prepare young people to cope with such situations and overcome them, under a political system that is completely discredited even in the view of those who profit from it.

In addition to these repercussions, there is antagonism between rural and urban areas, and between rich and poor. In fact, the already sizable gap between rich and poor is going to get larger and thus spawn destabilizing social tensions.

Especially since the wretched conditions outside the cities that encourage the rural exodus—which it was hoped agrarian reform would attenuate—and the abandonment of the countryside naturally aggravate poverty in urban areas as well as all the problems of promiscuity and congestion.

Another consequence of this urban "inflation" is the incredible pollution, which creates dangerous living conditions. In that regard, the inhabitants of Oued Smar (near the public sewer) constitute a very significant example: It is not unusual to find whole families suffering from asthma as a result of toxic emissions.

In the future, a catastrophic scenario—based on further exacerbation of exclusion and social inequalities, and degradation of the environment, quality of life, infrastructure, and public services, all leading to a cancerous growth in deviant behavior and perhaps to much higher levels of endemic violence—cannot be ruled out.

To prevent "the constantly expanding cities from turning into ghettos the larger they grow and to avert violence-engendering social tensions, more and more resources would have to be allocated to urban infrastructure, to improvement of transport systems, housing, and to social services benefiting the poorest (instead of ignoring them, as the plight of thousands of Algerians is ignored today)."

If urbanization continues to run rampant and uncontrolled, there will be no escape from choking congestion, urban paralysis, asphyxia of the new settlement towns, and intensification of social problems.

The current seething unrest, which first boiled up in 1988, is not a passing fever; it may be (though we cannot say for certain) the prelude to unprecedented upheaval. You can amend the constitution 10 times over without really changing anything. The malaise runs deeper than that.

Antiterrorist Law; Lawyers Protest Revisions

*93AF0624B Algiers ALGER REPUBLICAIN in French
8 May 93 pp 1, 2*

[Article signed R.H.: "Amendment of the Antiterrorist Law: Lawyers Raise Their Voices"]

[Text] The legislative amendment to the 1992-93 anti-terrorist law is still causing a stir among bar members.

Following the defense lawyers' collective boycott decision in the case of the Houari Boumediene airport bombing—a decision that caused the trial, which initially started on Wednesday, to be postponed twice—we learned that on that same day, trial lawyers of the Annaba region met in a general assembly and decided "no longer to plead before any special jurisdiction courts."

In a motion read to the press, the lawyers considered that this amendment represents "a serious attack against the rights of the defense and the dignity of the legal profession, and constitutes a violation of constitutional rules...."

The lawyers, who emphasized the fact that this is merely a matter of procedure involving the practice of their profession, asked the HCE [Higher State Council] president to refer the matter to the Constitutional Council, which should decide on the constitutionality of the decree in question, in particular the articles concerning the rights of the defense, and they recommended, "setting up a crisis center to monitor the situation as it develops..."

As is known, Article 31 of the amended law—which is the article at issue—provides in fact that, "in addition to the discretionary powers provided under Article 286 of the penal code, in case of disturbances the presiding judge may order the temporary or final expulsion of one of the parties or any other individual, by any legal means. In addition, any breach of his professional obligations committed in court by a defense lawyer may be immediately repressed by the jurisdiction to which the case is referred at the prosecution's request. In this context, the applicable sanctions are: temporary or final expulsion from the current session; temporary suspension of three months to one year."

In addition, we heard that the 11 other regions of the country were to hold similar extraordinary general assemblies last Thursday.

In the same connection, the Algiers bar association published a communique on 6 May, which is designed to clarify the "confusion" that, according to the authors, is fostered between the "trial of the authors of the Algiers airport bombing and the reaction of lawyers as a whole to the legislative decree..." that they believe constitutes "an attack against the rights of the defense."

Mentioning "the seriousness" of the provisions in question, the bar association recalled that it did not fail to bring it to the government's attention "long before their publication."

Finally, after noting that it was "the coincidence between the date of publication of the above-mentioned decree and the date of the current trial" that "served as a

pretext" for this "erroneous" interpretation and confusion, the bar association reaffirmed the lawyers' concern for "the respect of the rights of the defense, sole guarantee of a strong, serene, and credible justice system."

On the other hand, however, there is no need to stress the fact that the actions of certain lawyers, who chose to exchange "their robes for 'kamis,'" or who foster said "confusion" with the sole objective of attempting to find some way out for notorious fundamentalist criminals, do not, for their part, promote a "strong, serene, and credible justice system."

What are the ins and outs of this power struggle that seems to oppose the lawyers and the judiciary at a time when extremely serious cases are to be tried in the special courts? While there can be no doubt about who benefits from this state of things, nevertheless many aspects of the issue still remain concealed.

Human Rights Situation Said Deteriorating

93AF0592E Algiers LIBERTE in French 3 May 93 p 2

[Article by Z. Aliou-Salah: "Pierre Sane, General Secretary of Amnesty International: 'We Note a Serious and Worrying Deterioration in Algeria"'; first paragraph is LIBERTE introduction]

[Text] "The State itself should start by obeying the law." "It is urgent to stop this serious and worrying deterioration of the human rights situation in Algeria."

Mr. Pierre Sane presented a serious indictment of the human rights situation in Algeria, stressing the fact that "since the publication of the report on Algeria dated 2 March 1993, Amnesty International has noted a serious and worrying deterioration of human rights." Faced with this situation, Pierre Sane appealed to the civilian society and all live forces of the Algerian nation to mobilize and call for the end of the infernal cycle of political violence, fear, and repeated violations that may end up holding Algerian society itself hostage.

Very pessimistic, Mr. Pierre Sane pointed out that in crisis situations such as our country's, "historically, protecting State and State security is used as justification for the State to deny citizens their rights, first the rights of the press, then the rights of the defense, and tomorrow the rights of the university will be violated."

In Algeria, he said, "torture is used systematically." And "alone, respect for basic rights can preserve respect for the law."

In Africa, in Asia, in the Middle East, in Europe, human rights are "consistently violated."

Mr. Pierre Sane also pointed out that governments have signed agreements, strict compliance with which they must ensure, in particular concerning human rights. Faced with the deterioration of the human rights situation, "some governments even engage in a conspiracy of silence." While deplored political assassination, hostage

taking, and the murder of members of the security forces, Mr. Pierre Sane emphasized that "we cannot fight terrorism with barbarity." The State may use only "the legal means granted to it by the Constitution."

The general secretary of Amnesty International called for an end to "the practice of torture, politically motivated assassinations, and the unwarranted use of murderous force, illegal executions, and the destruction of houses." He added that "legal provisions that do not comply with the international standards to which a government has adhered, should be repealed, as well as the rights of political refugees [sic]."

Mr. Pierre Sane concluded that it is "imperative for the government to bring its statements in agreement with facts. Because setting up human rights organizations is not enough to ensure that these are genuinely respected." Mr. Pierre Sane was received late yesterday afternoon by Mr. Redha Malek. A meeting with the HCE [Higher State Council] is scheduled for today.

[Box, p 2]

Bara, President of the World Human Rights Organization: 'We Leave the Responsibility of its Statements to Amnesty International'

"The presence of the general secretary of Amnesty International is proof of a very high level of cooperation in matters of human rights between the Algerian government, Algerian human rights organizations, and Amnesty International, whose reliability and impartiality are well known. We leave the responsibility of its statements to Amnesty International."

"But we are eager to maintain at all times a very high level of cooperation between this organization and Algerian human rights organizations."

Milk Policy Criticized; New Strategies

93AF0610E Algiers EL WATAN in French 5 May 93 p 3

[Article by Ghania Oukazi: "Milk Production: New Strategy"]

[Text] A new milk production strategy will soon be implemented. In fact, in the next few days a plan now being finalized will establish new measures and mechanisms to improve a production and distribution system, which up to now has been handled on a sectoral basis without any policy consistency.

Most of the milk Algerians consume comes from abroad. The import bill is \$560 million, at a cost of 2.5 francs per liter. If one adds by-products (cheese, butter, etc.), the total bill easily comes to \$1.5 billion. Some 97 percent of Algeria's domestic demand is met by importation. Per capita consumption in Algeria is estimated at 110 liters per year, versus 400 liters in developed countries. By contrast, in the Maghreb countries the average is only 40 liters, some of it in the form of the "Lahda" milk

NEAR EAST

collected at our borders. Domestic production covers only 3 percent, or 1 billion liters, of which 64 million is collected by milk marketing units.

The rest is not commercially improved but enters into the distribution system via dairy stores and other outlets, all of which however rely much more on imported milk, which is subsidized and thus enables them to "skim the cream."

In terms of dairy and potential dairy livestock, Algeria has 137,000 head of improved-breed cattle and 700,000 head of local breeds. A liter produced in Algeria can be sold for 12 Algerian dinars [DA]. With bonuses in some cases from marketing offices, the seller can get as much as DA14, enough to encourage breeders to produce more.

With 17 units in operation, collection and commercialization are handled by three offices: ORLAC [Birkhadem dairy] in the center region with 5 units, OROLAIT [Western Regional Office for Production of Milk and Dairy Products] in the west with 8 units, and ORELAIT [Eastern Regional Office for Production of Milk and Dairy Products] in the east with 4 units. They are also responsible for rehydrating the 240,000 tons of powdered milk imported.

Considered the "heavy industry of agriculture," milk production nevertheless is not yet systematically regulated. Producers have always made their own decisions with insufficient coordination. The results of course have been negative. Poor management and lack of consistency have been responsible for the "disappointments" breeders have encountered. That is why their numbers have diminished considerably in recent years. Also, successive governments have failed to create profit incentives. They have been content to establish an infrastructure based on hard currency, "suitable" only for processing imported milk. This allegation is strongly disputed, however, by Mr. Djaballah, general manager of ORLAC, who says marketing units are equipped to process both imported and local milk. "The 20-billion centime cost of a unit is clearly being amortized."

The policy on "local" milk prices [to sellers] has been adjusted several times. It has increased from DA4 per liter in 1989 to DA12 in 1992.

Mr. Kheireddine, president of the National Federation of Milk Producers, say these adjustments are not enough. Kheireddine, who claims producers number 60,000 (though the central government disputes the figure), argues an increase in the producer's price for milk is justified by increases in the cost of production factors.

According to the federation president, the price for a liter of milk has stagnated for 10 years while cost of livestock has increased sixfold. From DA8,000 it has grown to DA48,000, a quintal of bran now sells for DA230 versus DA35, and barley is DA450 versus DA150. "And that doesn't even take into account the gross shortage of equipment for breeders."

Lack of incentives for breeders goes back a long time. The irrigated plains that were supposed to make the Mitidja the country's "milk bowl" were instead turned over to EACs [expansion not given], which abandoned stock raising for speculative production and turned barns into doll factories. As a result, stalls for 70,000 cattle were eliminated.

Breeders say they need more resources to accomplish their task. First of all, they say they want enactment of a real livestock policy (hitherto nonexistent) and regulation of the industry by precise laws "that both control and protect," though at the same time they complain that government bureaucracy and marketing offices are responsible for most misunderstandings.

"We are asking to negotiate with them without divorcing milk from beef and its derivatives," the federation president said, insisting all the while that the industry's agreement is needed for all decisions. Breeders point out that always in the past the authorities have opted for importation, without feeling any need to rehabilitate domestic production. Statistics on this point are edifying. Some \$3.5 billion is spent on direct importation of food products, while only \$50 million could be spared for local milk production. "This would suggest the country has embarrassingly large facilities for importation but finds it extraordinarily difficult to produce," says one official in the Ministry of Agriculture.

True, a surplus of milk and other agricultural products in the European countries has contributed to reduced import prices. But one must now take into account the repercussions of current GATT negotiations on elimination of future subsidies for these products.

At all events, milk is one of the hottest issues in the agricultural sector. A debate is currently under way to finalize a plan to establish a detailed policy regulating the entire production and distribution system—"a plan whereby the breeder will be given the same status as any other economic operator," according to Dr. Rachid Benissa, an adviser in the Agriculture Ministry.

The change of optic and approach will involve the establishment of institutional and organizational mechanisms to reverse current trends. The aim will be to encourage breeders to produce more and thus reduce the total import bill.

Marketing offices will participate by purchasing cattle direct on behalf of the breeders. In exchange, the latter will provide specified amounts of milk for up to three years. A form of [crop] leasing will thus inure to the benefit of both sides. Additional collection units are planned. Private capital will be solicited.

The plan will be presented to the Council of Government in the coming days. "The plan addresses problems felt throughout the agrofood sector," concludes Mr. Benissa, who says a large part of that sector is 80 percent dependent on imports.

Creation of an interoccupational council is also under study. It will bring together all the various actors involved in the dairy industry. In that connection, Mr. Kheireddine points out that "breeders don't want the travesty of a council where producers are not represented."

Youth Group To Clean City Created

93AF0592D Algiers LIBERTE in French 2 May 93 p 8

[Article by Hakima Afiane: "Algiers, White City": 'No' to Filth"; first paragraph is LIBERTE introduction]

[Text] A few years ago, Algiers was a white city. It has now become a symbol of filth and neglect.

The citizens' lack of concern for the garbage that has been invading the capital for several years already and is the most frequency cause of flooded streets and foul-smelling sewage, is becoming simply revolting. Faced with the streets of this capital where filth is ever present, in this space where minimal hygiene seems undesirable, citizens remain in a state of profound lethargy.

Faced with this deplorable and revolting situation, and in order to put an end to the citizens' indifference, a group of young CPVA [People's Council of the City of Algiers] inspectors decided to create an association called "Algiers, White City" in order to combat this lack of hygiene.

The association was authorized a few months ago; the main objective of its members is to save Algiers from the great danger that threatens it, by making the citizens aware of the problem through information and civic education.

To implement their program, these determined young people intend to revive neighborhood committees, each committee being responsible for its own neighborhood. They are also considering using young people to watch over their neighborhoods and protect them against all would-be polluters; this would both create jobs for unemployed young people and take care of the environment.

As it does not yet receive subsidies, the association will operate with its own resources, until the authorities concerned look at the problem and, at last, decide to help these young people who, after all, are going to restore Algiers' image.

To provide additional explanations, the association has organized a week-long exhibition entitled "Open Doors on Hygiene" at the youth information and activities center, rue Didouche Mourad.

You all go see it!

Port Facilities, Equipment Said Obsolete

93AF0610B Algiers EL WATAN in French 8 May 93
p 3

[Article by A. Djabali: "Ports: Installations Obsolete"]

[Text] Thirty years after independence and half a century after the appearance of new merchandise-handling methods and new types of cargo vessels, our country is still using dilapidated equipment ill adapted to new international procedures and standards.

Annaba—That is the conclusion drawn by the various participants in a colloquium on the region's harbors held in Annaba at the initiative of EPAN [expansion not given], the management company for the country's biggest nonhydrocarbon export port.

Presentations focused on the lack of a real master port plan to clearly identify the new equipment needed and address the inadequacy of existing infrastructure (shallow draft, limited potential for expansion), the lack of funds to build workshops equipped with the tools required for a more comprehensive approach to maintenance, the shortage of personnel trained in new techniques and management, the poor coordination between maritime forwarding agents and other interested parties, the weak information management systems, the decrepitude of the country's rail lines and truck fleet, and the dearth of naval construction engineers, laboratories, and specialized research bureaus which has led to total dependence on foreign expertise.

The presentation by the GEMA [expansion not given] representative, of interest in several respects, discussed the backwardness of the port's juridical framework from the standpoint of the provisions in Laws 88/1 and Law 88/4, and emphasized the need to turn the port authorities from EPEs [public economic enterprises] and SPAs [expansion not given] into EPICs [public industrial or commercial enterprises].

Turning to the question what strategy is needed to make ports and users really competitive, GEMA proposed adapting port infrastructure and superstructures to projected needs under a market economy, a complete overhaul of the port system and its conceptual framework, creating or inciting competition between ports, increasing the competitiveness of the transport network, greater empowerment of operators in the maritime and port community to make it more flexible and adaptable, clearer definition of the roles played by different operators, encouraging creation of organs to improve coordination between port operators at the local, regional, and national levels, development of consciousness raising, public awareness, and promotional activities, and finally publication of a guidebook identifying and describing the various port users.

While the presentation by the customs representative (who merely read the text of the laws and regulations currently in force) seems not to have responded to the

expectations of colloquium participants, the spokesman for SNTM-HYPROC [Maritime Transports of Hydrocarbons] was a gold mine of useful information, especially with regard to port security needs.

Lack of Security

For example, we learned about security problems at Bethioua and Arzew (where security stations in some instances are not located close enough to each other) and about the risks posed by obstruction from bitumen spillover from the cooling system of the SONELGAZ [National Electricity and Gas Company] electric generating station, by the close proximity to downtown Bejaia of the offloading dock for oil products, by poor lighting at port facilities, by water table contamination at Annaba and Algiers from ballast boats, by the lack of deballasting stations, by siltation (which engenders burdensome restrictions affecting accommodation of deeper draft vessels, and by the inadequacy or nonexistence of fresh-water provisioning points, requiring vessels to pay through the nose to draft tugboats into service to transport fresh water.)

In its capacity as a shipowner, SNTM-CNAN [CNAN-Algerian National Shipping Company] said it will focus on accessibility, port security, adaptation of dock structures to different types of vessels, products, and warehousing facilities, and the problem of demurrage surcharges resulting from slow offloading, which in some cases takes six to 10 times longer than contractual norms specify.

In addition to costing foreign ships money, sometimes in the form of hard-currency payments, demurages immobilize ships, slow down turnover, and therefore encourage recourse to foreign shippers.

Although not regulated by any law, and although anyone can call himself a maritime expert, shipping faces enormous difficulties, a fact that leads to two conclusions: First, "the need to agree on a framework for concertation to identify and then implement solutions to short- and medium-term problems as they are encountered." Second, "Neither insurers nor the consignees affected by the disposition of their merchandise have considered exploiting their access to expertise to help transporters and above all lightermen reduce cargo damage."

The Annaba Chamber of Commerce as an interested party profited from the occasion to issue an appeal through its president for creation of a port promotion and development association.

Associations Offer Citizens Support Abroad
93AF0610C Algiers EL WATAN in French 6 May 93
 p 3

[Article by Ghania Oukazi: "Algerians Abroad"]

[Text] Faced with a multitude of problems, Algerian communities in many foreign countries have found community associations the ideal vehicle to promote dialogue and solidarity.

Many associations have sprung up over the last few years in countries with large Algerian communities. France is the country most affected, because Algerians are more numerous there than elsewhere. Benefiting from a 1901 French law allowing creation of associations of foreign nationals, Algerian residents in France have learned to discuss their problems and preoccupations among themselves in these fora. The feeble support they receive from AAE (Friends of Algerians in Europe) has had a lot to do with their growth.

The biggest associations play a preponderant role in integrating Algerian workers into the host country. Cultural identity also occupies an important place in their program and indeed has become their major theme. Many actions in this vein have been undertaken by AASEPT (Algerian Association for Solidarity, Mutual Aid, and Worker Assistance) and APICA [expansion not given], which works to promote national identity and integration of the Algerian community in various regions, especially in the Meurthe and Moselle regions where it originated. Associations for Algerian residents are also springing up in other French cities such as Valenciennes, where AAC (Association of Algerians in the Cambresis) was created, and Strasbourg, which has its ASCABR (Athletic and Cultural Association for Algerians in the Lower Rhine).

Even businessmen well established in France have decided to organize, creating "Club 92 Nexus" to dialogue, unify, and consolidate efforts to promote Algerian economic development while boosting Algerian products in France. All these associations and many others joined together in 1992 under the umbrella of FAAF, the Federation of Algerian Associations in France.

The basic goal is the integration of Algerian residents, which is a difficult task, especially because recent changes in the French political climate give cause for concern about the future. Even though our communities in distant countries such as Canada are negligible in size, creation of associations has given Algerians there the opportunity to get acquainted with and help each other. It also offers a means of easing the pangs of homesickness our expatriate nationals feel, especially around the times of such traditional observances as Ramadhan and Aid.

The ACA (Averroes Cultural Association) in Montreal was created for this purpose. Its activities are also supported by the AAC (Algerian Association of Canada), the Berber Association, the Aures Association, ASCAU (Scientific and Cultural Association of Algerians at Laval University), RAG (an association of Algerians in Quebec), and many others. Algerians living in the United States have their own associations such as AANA (American Algerian National Association).

Created in 1989, this association works primarily to promote Algerian culture, so the latter will not be forgotten, especially by children born in America. The association devotes a great deal of effort to teaching them about their cultural identity.

Algerians living in Sweden have formed a cultural association in Stockholm. The creation of all these associations, most of them nonprofit, has effectively contributed to strengthening the ties between Algerians living abroad. They even offer instruction in the Arabic and Berber languages. They also get regular reports on conditions in the country and keep tabs on socio-economic changes affecting emigrant workers.

In addition to member contributions, some associations receive host country subventions. They keep an eye on the thousands of Algerians residing abroad, especially when the latter come to them for some kind of assistance. But they are also making efforts to get directly involved in Algeria's economic development.

EGYPT

Barter Agreement Made With Ukraine

93AF0580B Cairo *AL-AHRAM WEEKLY* in English
29 Apr-5 May 93 p 4

[Report by Jamal Fadil]

[Text] The Egyptian Exports Development Company (EEDC), an affiliate of the Egyptian Exports Development Bank (EEDB), has reached a three-year barter agreement, worth \$48 million, with a Ukrainian foreign trade company.

The EEDC Board Chairman, Samir al-Sharqawi said that under the agreement, Promash, a company affiliated to the Ukrainian Ukrimpex foreign trade organisation, will provide Egypt with drills needed for the Abu Tartur phosphate project. The EEDC will export 80 percent of the agreement's value in the form of consumer and durable goods to a Ukrainian chain of department stores.

A special delegation from Ukraine visited Egypt recently to discuss the details of the agreement. The value of the Egyptian goods exported to Ukraine last month was fixed after negotiations between the EEDB and the Ukrainian National Bank for Export and Import.

Emil Rizqallah, commercial adviser at the EEDC, pointed out that the negotiations represent the first stage of trade cooperation between Egypt and Ukraine in which the private sector will participate.

According to Rizqallah, products worth \$500,000 will be introduced to the Ukrainian market to test its acceptance of the goods. He hinted, however, that other private sector-produced durable goods, including refrigerators, ovens and wool fabrics would be added to the pilot list.

He also stated that dealing in the first stage of the agreement will be conducted in U.S. dollars according to market rates.

In the light of the results of the first stage, the Ukrainian company will go ahead with the second stage of the agreement by importing Egyptian products in return for drills and other equipment. The executive agreement of the second stage will be signed later this month during a visit by EEDC officials to Ukraine.

Rizqallah emphasised that the implementation of the second part of the barter agreement is dependent on the results of the first stage, adding that the Ukrainian party will deliver the drills after having already received around 20 percent of the value of the agreement, some \$9 million.

Bilateral Trade With Czech Republic Discussed

93AF0580E Cairo *AL-AHRAM WEEKLY* in English
29 Apr-5 May 93 p 4

[Article by Niveen Wahish]

[Text] An Egyptian economic delegation is currently visiting Prague to finalise a joint Egyptian-Czech trade agreement. The draft for the agreement had previously been discussed by both sides when a Czech delegation visited Cairo for three days last month. However, many points were left unresolved.

This exchange of visits is the first since the formation of the Czech republic, and the Czech delegation chose Egypt as a gateway for approaching the Middle East and Africa.

The trade agreement is expected to set an outline of trade relations between the two countries. The previous trade agreement had been signed in 1979 with the Czechoslovak government. It had since been renewed every five years. The new agreement will be short-term, renewable every year. The agreement takes into account the new economic situation in the Czech republic, which is undergoing reform and conversion to a market economy. Tomas Vokr, Commercial Counsellor at the Embassy of the Czech republic said that in view of the economic reforms, taking place in both countries, deals were no longer signed by governments. Unlike the past, the two governments will now only set down the general guidelines for economic cooperation.

As to the situation in the Czech republic, Vokr said that the Czech delegation to Egypt last month had explained the economic situation to Egyptian officials. In meetings with the Ministry of Economy, the Commercial Representation Office, the business sector and the private sector, the delegation had explained that the Czech currency had stabilised and that monopolies on foreign trade had been lifted. The country also had a low unemployment rate of 2.5 percent, and a decreasing rate of inflation.

NEAR EAST

Privatisation in the Czech republic will take place in several stages, said Vokr. The first stage includes the privatisation of small workshops, shops and enterprises where individuals have no capital, but can take credit from the banks.

The second stage of privatisation involves selling the huge national industries. Vokr said that since citizens should be the first to own part of their industries, a 'voucher' method had been adopted. This included selling vouchers, worth considerable amounts, for token prices to the public. Citizens would then use the voucher, worth more than it was bought for, to buy shares in the national industries. However, this method does not provide the capital needed to run the industry. To solve this, foreign investors will be allowed to take part in bids to buy the state-owned companies.

Another form of privatisation has been to return businesses to their original owners. This includes those nationalised since February 1948.

In 1992 Czechoslovak exports to Egypt were roughly \$75 million, an increase of 12 percent from 1991. Imports from Egypt were just \$7 million, a 100 percent increase from 1991. However, Vokr said this figure was actually eight or nine times higher, as Egyptian goods also enter the Czech republic indirectly from neighbouring countries, but are unaccounted for in the official figures.

Whereas deals in the past took place between the two governments, today the role of the government is limited to setting down the general trading guidelines. Previously the exchange of goods took place via barter deals, under which prices were usually higher than when bought directly.

Vokr attributed the small amount of Egyptian exports to the Czech republic to their high prices. Goods traditionally bought from Egypt, such as leather products, were cheaper from Turkey and the Far East. As for citrus fruits, another Egyptian export, the Czechs would rather buy Egyptian fruit via German importers. Although Egyptian producers offer discount on large quantities, the unavailability of large capital in the Czech republic made it difficult to buy such quantities.

Vokr cited the example of a supermarket. In our terms a supermarket is a big entity; however, it cannot import quantities large enough to earn a discount. It could only import a small amount at a high price, in addition to the costs of shipping, insurance and taxes. "As a result, it was cheaper to buy smaller amounts from German importers at a lower price and with lower transportation costs.

Another example is Egyptian cotton clothes which sell at very high prices. To many western European countries, the Egyptian label might justify the price by indicating that it is made from the best cotton. But Vokr said: "Czechs are not yet aware of such details. If they see a

cheaper T-shirt produced in Hong Kong or Korea at 25 or 50 percent cheaper, they will buy it regardless of what it is made of."

The Czech republic specialises in heavy industries, and its exports to Egypt include electrical power stations, machinery, diesel engines, irrigation pumps, generators and motorcycles. Other exports which they hope to develop when Egypt removes its trade barriers are chinaware and jewellery.

Other agreements between the two countries are currently under discussion. These include an agreement on the protection of investment, avoiding double taxation and economic cooperation in a variety of fields. Meanwhile Egypt is taking part in the International Consumer Goods Fair in Brno, while another Czech delegation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is due to visit Egypt in May.

Article Argues Hala'ib's Nationality

93AF0588A Cairo AL-DIFA' in Arabic Apr 93 pp 16-21

[Article by Major General A.H. Muhammad 'Umar al-Khattab: "Hala'ib is Egyptian"]

[Text] In more than one speech about the masses of Egyptians on our southern border, President Mubarak has asserted that there is no border problem between us and Sudan. There is the 1899 accord, which clearly defined the political borders between the two countries; all we need do in light of that, within the framework of the legitimacy it grants, is to secure Egypt's sovereignty over its own national soil.

The philosophy here is simple: Egypt views Sudan as a direct neighbor, to which Egypt is bound by historic ties of cooperation and mutual strategic interests; by bonds of life across the [Nile] Valley, imposing the determination of distinction and establishment of the special character and integration of these relations. That, however, does not mean that in national terms Egypt will relinquish its rights to take the steps necessary to see that its security is not infringed upon.

This is Egypt's view of the nature of these relations. Is Sudan's view the same—is it inclined the same way? Or is the phase through which Sudan is passing, in light of its current rule, characterized by a unique formula in its inclinations, and an immoral political line, overriding the special nature of the two brotherly nations' relations over the Valley?

The consequences of the course of the Sudanese political movement and the nature of the development of Egyptian-Sudanese relations in recent years has suspended patriotic sensitivity at the present time. This relationship might be described as stagnated, tense, and incapable of achieving the hopes, goals, and ambitions of the two peoples of this Valley. One sign of this tension is the problem of Hala'ib in the extreme south of Egypt. What is this problem? What is its historical background, its

evolution, the facts and political dimensions, and the likelihood of its effect on future relations between these two countries with their common Arab, Islamic, and African nature?

Historical Evolution of the Problem

The problem of Hala'ib is a particularly delicate one in the bilateral relations between Egypt and Sudan. The historical facts of the problem are rooted in the last century, when parts of Sudan were subject to Egyptian rule—Egypt governed Sudan since 1820 and its authority was in force until 1881. Egypt exercised total sovereignty over Sudan in accordance with documents dated 13 February 1841 and 27 May 1866, which granted Egypt the right to continue the exercise of its sovereignty over Sudan. Britain occupied Egypt after that, in 1882, and Sudan was governed under the Condominium. On 19 January 1889, the treaty between the Egyptian government and Britain provided that the word Sudan would comprise all territories south of the 22d parallel. In accordance with the 1899 treaty that set out the process of administering Sudan under the Condominium, the Egyptian interior minister issued numerous administrative decisions subsequent to the 1902 treaty, which caused some Egyptian areas north of the 22d parallel to be subject to Sudanese administration and some areas south of the line to Egyptian administration. That was to facilitate the administrative process over Egyptian and Sudanese tribes who grazed their flocks over the common border. Thus there were three disputed regions along the borders.

The First Region: Course of the Nile

This region includes the areas north of the 22d parallel as far as Wadi Halfa, and on the basis of this administrative decision about 4,014 feddans of Egyptian agricultural land—with 82,206 palm trees, 10 villages, and 13,138 inhabitants—were annexed to Sudan. The dispute over this region is presently considered to be a moot point, because the High Dam Lake has submerged the whole area, but the Sudanese side is demanding fishing rights in it.

The Second Region: Jabal 'Albah

On the basis of the administrative decision of 14 November 1902, the Jabal 'Albah strip was administratively annexed to Sudan in order to facilitate the application of a single system of law over the population of this region, given that the people were of the Beja al-Bishariyah tribes (most of the Beja live on the Sudanese side of the border).

This region is shaped like an equilateral triangle whose 300-kilometer base lies along the 22d parallel, with 200-kilometer sides, with an area of 12,500 square kilometers. This region is bounded by a line starting at the Red Sea coast, near Bi'r al-Shalatayn, that goes south-west for 58 kilometers to Bi'r Minayjah, then north for 28 kilometers to Jabal Najrub, then southwest for 70 kilometers to Jabal Umm al-Tuyur. It then goes in

a westerly direction for 58 kilometers, south, with a small digression to the west for 240 kilometers, where it meets the political borders that run along the 22d parallel. This is considered to be one of the desert regions richest in groundwater and plant life, in addition to mineral resources (magnesium), which is a strategic mineral.

The Third Region: Bartazuja

This region is inhabited by the al-'Ababidah tribes, most of whom are found within Egypt from Jabal 'Albah to the east and the Nile to the west. Bartazuja is a Sudanese region generally poor in all economic resources. On the basis of the administrative order, the area was subject to Egyptian administration. It has a small surface area—less than 600 square kilometers.

It was in light of this administrative order that the Egyptian-Sudanese border dispute erupted. Egypt viewed the territories north of the 22d parallel as Egyptian, in accordance with the 1899 treaty. It was established on the basis of Sudan's temporary constitution in 1953, despite the existence of Sudanese tribes within it who were subject, administratively, to the Sudanese government. The Sudanese saw Egypt as relinquishing the territories north of the 22d parallel, which the administrative amendments of 1902 provided for.

Since Sudan did acknowledge what had been settled administratively through the mediation of the Anglo-Egyptian minister of the interior at that time, recognition of the authenticity of the treaty was inarguable and logical. Thus there is a legal fact confirmed by the 1899 treaty: that the territories south of the 22d parallel were what is called Sudan; and that Egyptian sovereignty, legally and historically, over anything north of that line, while charging the Sudanese government with administrative supervision over the population of that region was limited, did not mean the state's relinquishing of its sovereignty. This is confirmed by the 1902 decision of the Egyptian minister of the interior to apply the administrative laws applied in Sudan on the Beja al-Bishariyah tribes that reside in Egypt, to give them freedom of movement to and from the Egyptian-Sudanese borders, which did not affect Egypt's exercise of every possible manner of legal and actual sovereignty by virtue of the border treaty, beginning with the search for minerals, which went on from 1914 until 1985, when the Egyptian Mines Authority proposed putting the 'Albah strip under Egyptian administration. In the 1936 treaty between Egypt and Britain, Egypt stood by its policy on Sudan; it was stated in Article 11 of the treaty that "nothing in this Article provides for any infringement of sovereignty over Sudan." This treaty is considered the first one subsequent to the 1899 treaty that deals with the frontier with Sudan. This is in addition to the regular administrative, medical, and food missions that the armed forces have sent (and still send) in order to offer administrative and medical support to forces, isolated posts, and local citizens, since the administrative decision of 1902, down to the present.

In light of the Sudanese government's 1957 law, which stipulated the partition of electoral districts in preparation for the holding of parliamentary elections in early 1958, and which included the Hala'ib and Shalatayn regions in the 'Albah strip, a dispute broke out between Egypt and Sudan in that region. It led to Sudan's submitting the problem to the Security Council on 20 February 1958. The Egyptian side was eager to preserve the friendly relations between the two countries and avoided stirring up the problem. Despite the fact that successive regimes in Sudan took steps that infringed upon Egypt's sovereignty over those territories, Egypt wanted to contain these policies, so that there would be no crisis in the diverse mutual relations, for the good of both countries' goals and interests.

Since 1985, however, Sudanese regimes have not only infringed upon Egypt's sovereignty over Hala'ib, but the region has become, with its size and constant openness, a threat to Egypt's security and economic interests through increased infiltration and smuggling (of arms, ammunition, untaxed goods, and currencies).

That is not all. The volume of this suspicious activity rose provocatively with the installation of the current government in Khartoum in 1989. We noted that this regime took one step after another in this region, which looked like escalated activity. In December[?] 1991, Sudan signed an accord with a Canadian oil company for oil exploration in nearly 10,000 square kilometers of the Hala'ib region. In January 1992, the counselor of the Sudanese Ports Authority stated that a Ports Authority delegation and representatives of mining companies would undertake a number of studies on developing the Hala'ib region, in the framework of a plan that included the establishment of a commercial port in Hala'ib and the construction of a wharf for the docking of commercial ships with capacities of up to 60,000 tons.

Due to Egypt's eagerness to avoid mutual escalation, it agreed to the formation of a joint committee to settle the question. The Sudanese regime, however, resumed its provocative activities inside that region, by establishing premises for new civilian companies in Abu Ramad, a boarding school, and a youth center. They brought in dozens of citizens and settled them on Egyptian territory. This activity was followed by smuggling over roads in the region, with an increase in terrorism in Upper Egypt, to strike at one of the pillars of Egypt's economic sector. This required the deployment of troops inside the region, to secure the roads and other routes on the 22d parallel. This was with the assurance of the special nature of the relations and Egypt's readiness to explore all aspects of the relations with the regime, which had made clear its tendency to act freely and to adopt a line inimical to the will and demands to safeguard the rights of these two Nile Valley peoples.

In the context of reaffirming its sovereignty over its people's grazing lands in the region, Egypt acted to raise their standard of living, improving the level of services

offered to the region's residents, whose number is estimated at 13,000, including the Umm-'Ali and Beja al-Bishariyah tribes, branches of the al-Hamid, Rab, and al-'Ulyab, and al-'Ababdah tribes, including branches of the al-Shababat and al-Masi'kab. Regional conditions and climate factors imposed upon all these tribes compelled them to live and do their herding in the mountains in the winter and to fish in the Red Sea in summer. They did not live permanently anywhere—they followed available grazing. Some of them have worked in the al-Nasir Phosphate Co. since its formation in the 1960s, but only a very small number. Today, however, the people of the region live in wooden houses or buildings with nearby facilities and services provided them—everything from water brought by ship from Safaja, which has eased from 80 tons in 1988 to 600 tons now, and is kept in 450-ton storage tanks and 60-ton capacity cisterns. Trucks make rounds among remote villages in the mountains. There is also regular monthly assistance: every family receives material and in-kind assistance, and a hospital, a school for Islamic education, and a number of bakeries have been established. These will regularly provide citizens with absolutely free bread. In addition, a bureau for tribal affairs was set up, to make things easier for citizens, and work has begun on a comprehensive plan to establish new cities and to create an advanced society, either by building ports in the region or residential cities with a network of roads and light communications, plus the setting up of a station for television reception, in order to connect the citizen of the region with the rest of the fabric of Egyptian society. One can thus gauge the extent of love of Egypt in the eyes of this region's citizens, and how they hope for a better future. It shines on their foreheads. They all support increased Egyptian assistance, and the speed of the administrative and human development measures in the region. This is confirmed by the Bureau of Tribal Aid Affairs, which Egypt established to assist and monitor the needs and requirements of the region's population.

The Political Dimension of the Problem

There have been many efforts to resolve the problem, but Sudanese actions still indicate the desire not to solve the problem through bilateral channels, through which all the problems confronting the growth of relations between the two countries might have been solved. Past Sudanese regimes have always kept the problem of Hala'ib invisible.

In presenting the current regime's policy on this problem, we end with the existence of a plan with which the regime intended to detonate the problem. This plan is intended to exploit the tense relations with Egypt, in which there is a tendency contrary to the goals of the revolution, characterized by extremism, and links with countries that have goals and ambitions that are incompatible with Egyptian interests in particular and Arab interests in general.

Despite Egypt's eagerness to solve these conflicts through meetings of the ministerial committee formed

for this purpose, the Sudanese delegation throughout the sessions used maneuvering, procrastination, and disregard for the root of the problem to obscure the fact that this region is subject to Egypt's total sovereignty. Thus it was eager not to discuss anything or to study the legal aspects of the problem so that the problem might be a source of unsolvable conflict.

On another front, the Sudanese reaction, since the eruption of this problem, has shown that the present Sudanese regime does not grasp how important it is that the two countries' relations maintain their special nature, as has been the case in past years. The regime has resorted to intensifying the problem and bringing it to regional and international organizations—to say nothing of its infringement upon other aspects of relations, which Egypt, for its part, has been eager to offer Sudan. All the regime did was reject all this and hinder the Egyptian educational mission and its schools. Then came the Sudanese Minister of Education's decision to close the Khartoum branch of al-Azhar University, which from 1955 to the present has provided Sudan with things no other country has offered in the way of science and learning.

Of course, there are a number of questions that arise. First of all, is the sabotage of relations the regime's doing, or is some outside party planning it? The simplest answer is that, no matter which is the case, Sudan will be the loser in the end. The regime, with its extremist leanings, claims to have given Sudan a new experience at the political level, lending Sudan Islamic weight and independent power. The true measure of judging that, however, is the Sudanese people themselves, who are suffering from acute economic problems, exacerbated by the Salvation Revolution, which has concentrated all its efforts on supporting and securing its stability, in order to achieve its private dreams and ambitions.

In closing, what I would like to emphasize the following. The kernel of the dispute between Egypt and Sudan, whose dimensions have started to grow more difficult recently, is not Hala'ib, or Sudan's wish for sovereignty over that region. The eruption of the problem is connected to the regime's eagerness to exploit it, in order to cover up its internal failure to solve Sudan's real problems on one hand, and to incite Sudanese public opinion against Egypt on the other.

It is inconceivable that Egyptian-Sudanese relations will return to normal when the border problem ends. The real problem is the intentions of that same regime and its goals, which go beyond the geographic borders of Sudan, and whose implementation is planned with illegal means.

Egypt is as eager as possible to solve any bilateral disputes with any negative repercussions on the strong relations between two peoples of the Nile Valley. Our hopes and pains are shared; both Egypt and Sudan are each the natural extension and strategic depth of the other. While their relationship may pass through tense

times, as often happened under previous governments in Sudan, with conflicting points of view on some issues, this relationship between the two peoples of the Valley has always remained in its normal state, linked by shared interests and goals.

But it is up to the Sudanese regime to look upon this problem in a new way, with a vision that is cognizant of its true dimensions. Otherwise it will resort to exploiting this sensitive problem. Hala'ib is Egyptian. There is no need here to reassert that the most dangerous thing that can threaten a nation is encroachment upon its national soil.

Opposition Figure Criticizes Prime Minister

*93AF0569A Cairo AL-AHRAR in Arabic 19 Apr 93
p 1, 3*

[Article by Mustafa Kamil Murad]

[Text] Dr. 'Atif Sidqi was appointed prime minister in 1987, that is about seven years ago.

This is the longest an Egyptian prime minister has held this office since Egypt has known the council of ministers or the council of overseers system, as it was called in the last century. Therefore, Sidqi's name will go down in history as the man with the longest period of service as Egyptian prime minister since Muhammad 'Ali's era, that is since 200 years ago.

But the problem is that the seven years he has been in office have been seven lean years. In other words, the country has been hit by seven calamities from which the population has suffered severely. There is no doubt that this is a visitation from God to the long-suffering Egyptian people, a trial by the Almighty God of the Egyptian people's patience. In other words, the period of Dr. 'Atif Sidqi's rule was eventful with what we call in the vernacular "balawis." In this article we want to point out the worst calamities or "balawis" so that we record in the annals of history how the Egyptian people never lose patience.

First: The Egyptian people have been plagued with exorbitantly high prices, increasing annually by an average of 20-30 percent, to the extent that a major gap between wages and prices has developed.

Second: Dr. 'Atif Sidqi's government has printed the largest amount of banknotes Egypt has known in its contemporary history. Issued banknotes have increased from seven billion in 1977 to 15 billion in 1993. Undoubtedly, this is one of the most important factors affecting inflation and high prices.

Third: Domestic debts have increased enormously, reaching 105 billion pounds in 1992, compared to no more than 30 billion pounds in 1977.

Fourth: During this time the foreign debt has increased from \$28 billion to \$48 billion. Had President Mubarak

not been able to reduce the foreign debt to \$21 billion, the country could have suffered a serious foreign currency crisis.

Fifth: the general budget deficit remained at an unprecedentedly high level during the period 1977-93. This deficit exceeded 70 billion pounds, that is 70 percent of the national income.

Sixth: There was a clear drop in the general national product and income averages, dropping from an average of 6.5 percent to 1.5 percent in 1991-92, according to the World Bank report. Yet the government insists that national income growth exceeds 4.5 percent. But what is the truth? Only the prime minister knows it.

Seventh: During the era of this cabinet the country has been afflicted by several natural, social, and economic disasters. Foremost of these was the earthquake that did away with nearly four billion pounds of the national wealth. And during the last year terrorism has spread like it never has before.

Finally, and I hope this is the last, mass hysteria has appeared in some girls' schools. Unemployment has become rampant among graduates with high and middle qualifications, with the total reaching about 1.5 million unemployed.

Added to that is the failure of the government to develop the public sector and to establish holding companies. What is strange about the government is its puzzling, ambiguous stand, to the extent that chairmen of public sector companies, both the directly owned and holding companies, cannot tell their heads from their tails. They are still waiting for ministerial decisions confirming them in their positions or dismissing them.

Finally, I must point out here that the government has made undeniable achievements. But these are minor in comparison to the calamities and disasters that have befallen this country's population. Among its limited achievements are: increased wages over several successive years, cancellation of some debts and rescheduling of the rest, after a 50-percent drop during recent years. But this limited achievement cannot be compared with the enormous number of serious mistakes the government has committed, as a result of which the Egyptian pound rate has dropped from 90 cents to the pound in 1987 to 30 cents in 1993. May God protect us from more! These were the seven lean years. Will we later enter the seven fat years at the hands of a new government that can formulate new policies, and will relief come through it? Pray this may come to pass, O Lord. Amen!

Academic Views Social Factors Behind Extremism
93AF0580D Cairo AL-AHRAM WEEKLY in English
 29 Apr-5 May 93 p 7

[Article by Nabil 'Abd-al-Fattah]

[Text] The recent spate of violent incidents marks a distinct phase in the societal crisis developing in Egypt, in which civil forces are paralysed and unable to intervene to bring about a balance between the competing patterns of violence of the ruling political elite and the alternative radical Islamist elite.

The fragility of these civil forces, only recently emerged among the middle class, vividly illustrates the psycho-political crisis in Egypt dating from the defeat of June 1967 and its profound impact on the collective psyche of this class, together with its plans for political, social and cultural modernisation in Egypt and the Arab world under the semi-liberal banner of Nasirism.

The fact that these central social forces in Egypt are playing no part, political or social, in the rituals of violence of this raging conflict is one of the most striking aspects of the Egyptian problem. The reason for this, and for their fear of violence combined with political apathy, is that these are defeated people. Their modernisation project failed, both in the conflict with Israel and in efforts to create a new Egyptian national identity in reaction to Western-style modernity.

These people were also among the social victims of al-Sadat's infitah policy of opening up Egypt economically to the West after the October war of 1973. At the same time they were excluded from political life, which became the preserve of the upper classes.

This deliberate exclusion of the middle classes has led to a state of socio-political alienation, further exacerbated by the way some of them have been sucked away to the desert oil kingdoms as a way of escaping the pressures of social and economic life in Egypt.

Political parties, both official and clandestine (by which I mean the Marxists and Nasirists), have been unable to attract many of the younger members of the middle classes, some of whom have turned instead to the forces of radical Islam, including al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah (the Islamic Group), Al-Jihad and so on, while others have been attracted to the Muslim Brotherhood.

In the absence of any third party with a socio-political programme, the theatre of official violence and Islamist resistance has now turned into a deadly two-way contest between competing elites for political power, involving a succession of shootings and killings on both sides, arrests and military trials. Perhaps the main point to make about all this is that a straightforward, no-holds-barred fight has now become a highly complex compound struggle, in which the conflict between the radical Islamist elite and the governing elite also reflects the interplay of other conflicts and aspects of the Egyptian problem as a whole.

We are now seeing a struggle between different generations in Egyptian political life, a generation belonging to the end of the age of flawed liberalism before July 1952 and the successive generations of the July Revolution.

On the one hand you have an older generation hanging on to the reins of power and wealth, yet offering no vision or solutions to the various crises facing the Egyptian political system. Some members of that group have turned the machinery of state into an area of political corruption, and they have plundered public funds, as the radical Islamist forces are only too well aware—as, indeed, is the politically apathetic and silent majority of Egyptian society.

Furthermore, the younger generation are denied any opportunity to hold “social and political positions,” as leadership roles in the decrepit and politically and intellectually impotent official political parties—and also the Muslim Brotherhood—are called.

On the other hand you have the radical Islamist tendency giving the younger generation plenty of opportunities to take on leadership roles and become “emirs” in Al-Jihad and the Islamic Group. Both organisations have people under 20 years old leading cell-groups and taking local initiatives in terms of organisational and social action and contacts.

The struggle is thus between a comfortable, corruption-ridden elite and an ideologically-driven generation with a puritanical plan to clean up society; a cultural struggle between Western consumerism and a traditional culture trying to assert its traditional values in the face of inexorable westernisation.

So what we are seeing is a clash between competing value systems, as well as a geographical conflict between the centre and the periphery, between Upper Egypt and the capital, and between the impoverished slums on the fringes of Cairo and al-Jizah and the well-off districts in the heart of the capital.

The picture is thus a complex one, reflecting historical rifts in Egypt's cultural and social structure going back to the beginning of the modern state. The Egyptian problem as such, however, does not come into the political struggle being fought out with guns and bullets between these two rival elites, as neither of them have any programmes or package of policies for dealing with this problem in all its various aspects. All they are doing is battling for political power.

The ruling group has only limited numbers of supporters it can count on (for reasons of self-interest) in this struggle, by drawing on its network of political, economic and social contacts. The governing elite has become unable to mobilise new members either internally or among its immediate supporters, for fear that these new elements might represent an alternative to itself. These new elements—business people and academics who have worked or studied in the United States or with international organisations—have ties with the West, old-fashioned liberal ideas and the support of important groups abroad, although they are politically isolated at home and lack any real experience of Egyptian political and social life.

The alternative political elite, meanwhile, the radical Islamists, are striking violently, unflinchingly and hard at leading figures in the governing elite.

The aim is to shatter the government's reputation, spread terror among its supporters and the security forces, and create a deep rift between the security forces (who are fighting a war without any philosophy, policy or deep support) and the ruling group, leading to fragmentation and thus speeding up the process of political collapse and inability to maintain control.

The Islamist strategy, meanwhile, is based on the principle of the fish swimming in its natural element, as the Islamists melt into the background provided by dense areas of human habitation.

It is therefore a political struggle between elites rather than between broad political and social forces, whose support in the struggle can be sought and won and can decide the outcome—and this is what is so dangerous about the present situation.

No doubt the Islamist movement would like, as part of its strategy, to win the sympathy of poor groups within society, but it recognises that because of their material conditions these people are bound to support it, given the choice between it and the ruling group, or else remain indifferent to the outcome of the struggle—either way, it does the Islamist groups no harm.

Their basic perception, however, as elite forces, is that the struggle is an elite struggle for the sake of political power, not a social role. They fight knowing that the struggle is taking place in a political vacuum, against a background of serious disequilibrium.

The problem for the ruling group is that it knows it is fighting not just for power but for its very existence—and its physical existence, at that, not just existence in the abstract, or position and prestige. At the same time it realises that the forces supporting it are not prepared to come out and fight.

The Copts, for example, support the government's policy towards the Islamist movement (though there are also wary people who constantly warn against such support), but they are not prepared to support it openly or pay the price of this support. They are, however, willing to talk to the Islamist forces—as they have already done with the Muslim Brotherhood, though this dialogue was broken off after the incidents in Algeria—so it might be possible to try for a dialogue with the Brotherhood, the Islamic Group and Al-Jihad.

At the same time there are those among the educated elite who may sympathise with the radical Islamists as victims of an unjust social system, while rejecting their political theories concerning the state and taking Shar'iah (Islamic law) as a basis for government. These people are nevertheless unable to support the government because of the constraints on democracy and the

lack of opportunities for those committed to the idea of the modern state and setting up a civil society.

This transformation of the politico-cultural struggle in Egypt into a bilateral struggle between two narrow groups explains not only the recent succession of violent incidents and the exhibitionism involved, as each side tries to make a point, but also the attempts at mediation and negotiation between the government and radical Islamist forces, the particular mechanisms used, the personalities and players involved, and their objectives. I will return to the subject of these mediation and negotiation efforts next week.

Privatization Society's Program Listed

*93AF0568A Cairo AL-AHRAM WEEKLY in English
15-21 Apr 93 p 4*

[Article by Sharif Delawar]

[Text] The Egyptian economy is undergoing a considerable restructuring programme aimed at revitalising market-driven forces. As was to be expected, the programme has had a negative impact on society. Sharp rises in commodity prices have resulted in an initial drop in the living standards of those people living below the poverty line and have reduced the purchasing ability of the better-off. These effects would be expected in any economy, but due to the lack of a well-planned programme to alleviate these initial shortcomings, the majority of the rural-based population as well as the urban middle classes have taken a negative attitude towards the economic restructuring programme.

The success of the programme in Egypt depends mainly on improving people's perceptions of it and on developing technical know-how concerning various mechanisms of privatisation and methods of sustaining and enhancing the privatised entities. With these two main objectives in mind, a group of conscientious citizens embarked on creating the non-profitmaking Egyptian Society for Market Economies (ESME). It was founded on 15 March 1992.

ESME's board of directors, chaired by former governor of the Central Bank of Egypt 'Ali Najim, identified three major programmes for immediate implementation. They are:

1. The establishment of a Privatisation Institute (PI) that will serve as the technical body to provide training and technical assistance in conducting feasibility studies, management and organisational improvements, restructuring and privatisation mechanisms.
2. The creation of an information centre that will provide information on various markets through an internationally connected database, provide the means of creating computer based business and management information systems, and create a reference library for self-study.

3. Sensitising the public to the socio-economic impact of a market economy in general, and privatisation in particular, through conducting seminars, symposiums, conferences and other mass media activities.

Hence, one of the main goals of ESME is to accelerate and improve the implementation of the privatisation programme by working in collaboration with the government and with enterprises and donor agencies committed to promoting private sector efficiency and enhancing enterprise performance. In this respect, 10 topics are on our agenda:

1. The concept of privatisation (public-private partnership).
2. Restructuring of state-owned enterprises.
3. The techniques of privatisation.
4. Plan for implementing a privatisation project.
5. Privatisation of public services (deregulation).
6. The state of Egyptian capitalism, management and labour.
7. Policy implementation.
8. The second face of privatisation: the social effects.
9. Privatisation and the economic world order.
10. Lessons from other countries.

ESME will also seek to promote competitiveness at the national level. Defining national competitiveness as achieving a trade surplus or balanced trade per se is inappropriate. The expansion of exports because of low wages and a weak currency, at the same time that the nation imports sophisticated goods that its companies cannot produce competitively, may bring trade into balance or surplus but lowers the nation's standard of living. Competitiveness also does not mean jobs. It is the type of jobs, not just the ability to employ citizens at low wages, that is decisive for economic prosperity. Consequently, the only meaningful concept of competitiveness at the national level is productivity. Productivity is the prime determinant of a nation's standard of living in the long term; what lies behind national per capita income. Hence, we have to understand the determinants of productivity and the rate of productivity growth.

ESME believes that while the free market system has many benefits, it also has its shortcomings. To be aware of these shortcomings is not to discredit the system, but merely to recognise that it is not perfect.

Metal Detectors Installed at Tourist Sites

*93AF0580A Cairo AL-AHRAM WEEKLY in English
29 Apr-5 May 93 p 2*

[Report by Nevine El-Aref; first paragraph AL-AHRAM WEEKLY comment]

[Text] Metal detectors, fire and burglar alarms will soon be installed at several monuments and museums but, according to the tourism police chief, the action is not related to the latest spate of terrorist activity.

Security precautions were tightened at tourist attraction sites and routes during the past few months following attacks by Islamist militants on tourist buses. Now precautions will be upgraded further by installing metal detector gates at several archaeological sites, monuments and museums in Cairo, Alexandria, al-Uqsur and Aswan.

The idea was mooted after a mysterious explosion rocked the pyramid of Khafre at al-Jizah at the end of March. The blast, which injured two workers slightly, was blamed on a chemical reaction of materials which were being used for restoration work inside the pyramid.

The metal detectors will be installed at the al-Jizah Pyramids, the solar boat museum next to them, the Egyptian Museum and other museums in the capital, the Citadel, the Graeco-Roman Museum in Alexandria, the Jewish synagogue in Alexandria, the Karnak temple in al-Uqsur and the Abu-Sunbul temples south of Aswan.

"Since terrorism is the talk of the moment, any security plans are thought to be part of the anti-terrorism measures. But this is not the case," said Muhammad Thaalab, chief of the tourist police. He said the action was meant to protect the monuments and museums not only against terrorists but also against robbery or sabotage by visitors who might be carrying metal items.

"Police have decided to use modern technology to provide greater security," Thaalab said. The project will be financed by the Egyptian Antiquities Organisation [EAO], "he added.

"We are ready to cooperate with the tourism police and to provide, at whatever expense, all the required metal detectors to cover as many sites as possible," said EAO chairman Dr Ibrahim Bakr. He said the company which will provide and install the detectors would soon be chosen from among several who competed for the bid.

Moreover, Bakr said, fire and burglar alarms will be installed at some of the sites such as the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, the Graeco-Roman Museum in Alexandria, the Karnak and Abu-Sunbul temples.

Asked about the anticipated public reaction, Sayyid Musa, head of the Egyptian tourism authority, said "the gates may not be easily accepted at first but the public, realising their importance, will get used to them."

Will they disfigure the general view of the monuments? No, Musa replied, the technicians installing them should take care.

More Economic Revitalization Efforts Attempted

Alexandria Shipyard Plans

93AF0591A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
5 May 93 p 13

[Article by Sabri al-Jundi]

[Text] Alexandria—The German Slomann [as published] Neptune Company has taken delivery of the Slomann Challenger container ship, which was christened at Alexandria Shipyard Company this week. The ship, with a tonnage of 5,800 tons, is one of four ships that the German company contracted Alexandria Shipyard to build at a total cost of 69,600,000 German marks [DM].

Alexandria shipyard chairman Tawakkal al-Maghribi told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the Alexandria shipyard had been contracted to build 11 ships over a six year period. They include three ships for the transport of grain with a tonnage of 6,300 tons per ship for another German company at a total cost of DM38.4 million, two ships for the transport of goods with a tonnage 6,500 tons per ship for Syria at a cost of DM41 million, a ferry accommodating about 400 passengers and 24 cars for a Swedish company at a cost of DM8 million, and a medium-sized ship with a tonnage of 13,000 tons for transporting goods between wharves and large ships in deep waters at a cost of DM5 million. The contracts for these ships total DM162 million.

Al-Maghribi said the shipyard chose the German mark as its contracting currency because of "its strong position in international currency markets and its high exchange rate stability. Also, most of the equipment not produced domestically is being imported from Germany with [payment in] marks."

Al-Maghribi said that the company has been contracted tentatively to build 14 new ships, including two for the transport of grain with a tonnage of 6,300 tons per ship at a cost of DM30 million for a German company, two ships for the transport of goods with a tonnage of 7,200 tons per ship at a cost of DM37.8 million for a German company, and ten grain ships with a tonnage of 12,400 tons per ship at a total cost of DM244 million. These contracts will be signed when the current negotiations are concluded and a delivery rate of four ships per year is set. In general, Alexandria shipyard's output will have to be increased to 100 percent of its operating capacity. In past years, only 30 percent of its operating capacity was used.

Al-Maghribi said that one of the shipyard's dry docks for ship repair is now being converted to handle ship building. Also, in order to ensure continuity in ship repair business, which is seeing a growing demand, intensive contacts have been made with a number of businessmen in the private sector in Egypt and other

Arab countries, with a view toward their financing the construction of the first prefabricated floating dock in Egypt.

Alexandria Bank Cancels Debt

*93AF0591B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
8 May 93 p 13*

[Text] Cairo—As part of a new initiative being mounted by Egyptian banks to help troubled companies in the public business sector, Alexandria Bank has agreed to cancel 24 million Egyptian pounds of Iron Ingots Company's banking interest and to freeze 30 million pounds of its 130 million pound debt to the bank.

An official source in the Metal Industries Holding Company said that negotiations are now being held with the National Investment Bank with a view toward its using a portion of its entitlement to share in the capital of al-Nasr Company for Metal Casting. This move is intended to enable the company to rectify an imbalance caused by financial burdens, which the company assumed after it increased its volume of investments. He said that a program has been drawn up in cooperation with the Public Sector Executive Business Office to correct the seven [metal] companies' financial positions. The program will be implemented during fiscal year [FY] 1993, which starts in July.

He added that the companies' planning budgets for FY 1993-1994 will be discussed in May, with a focus on obtaining the highest return on capital invested in companies to improve their financial positions. According to the source, other topics of discussion are to include the possibility of disposing of controlled assets to help improve financial liquidity in the company, and the speed by which the shares of state companies are valued. He said that the sluggish goods sitting in the companies' warehouses will be disposed of, and provisions will be made to link the production plan to the demands of domestic and foreign markets. The opening of new markets will also be a focus in the near future.

Egyptian-Greek Joint Venture

*93AF0591C London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
3 May 93 p 12*

[Text] Cairo—The Joint Egyptian-Greek Committee will study executive measures to establish a joint holding company with \$50 million in capital to promote trade between the two countries.

Egyptian economic sources told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that, during meetings scheduled to begin in Athens in early June, the Egyptian side will present a request to establish a permanent commercial center in Greece to familiarize the Greek market with, and promote, Egyptian products.

The chairman of the Egyptian-Greek Chamber of Commerce, Hasan Zaki, said that a number of Egyptian products will be exported once a joint holding company

is established, especially spun threads, cotton textiles, aluminum and aluminum products, vegetables, and consumer goods. These exports will boost Egypt's trade surplus, which totalled about \$102.2 million in January-December 1992.

The head of the Trade Representation Agency in Egypt's Economy and Foreign Trade Ministry, Medhat al-Juwayni, said that Egypt is interested in discussing a new draft agreement to encourage and protect investments. This agreement would replace a similar agreement ratified between the two countries in 1975. Egypt is also interested in discussing the conclusion of an agreement to preclude double taxation between the two countries in order to promote and develop trade and investments between relevant organizations and companies in the two countries. Other subjects that Egypt wishes to discuss include resolution of the residence and work contract problems of Egyptians working in Greece and mutual claims between the two parties regarding social insurance.

He added that the Egyptian side is still calling for the implementation of a navigation agreement signed between the two countries in 1981 and the convocation of the navigation committee stipulated in that agreement. Contacts are still being held between the relevant parties in the two countries to put this subject on the Joint Committee's agenda.

The Egyptian side intends to bring up several financial topics, including: an examination of the cancellation of hisabi debt ["hisabi" meaning foreign computed debt transferable only to Egypt and in Egyptian currency] of about 6.6 million dollars computed owing to Greece since 1981 following the abrogation of a payment agreement between the two countries; Greece's repayment of sums owed to Egypt's Religious Endowments Authority; and a demand by Egypt's Public Works Ministry for about \$17 million in financial damages from a Greek cement company stemming from the company's nonfulfillment of its obligations.

He said that the Greek side is focusing on the repayment of the 6.6 million hisabi dollar debt through the importation of Egyptian commodities; a Greek company's demand from Egypt's Housing Ministry for payment of the value of 49,000 tons of cement imported in 1986, and financial damages stemming from nonpayment to date; and other damages that could total about \$12 million.

Private-Sector Oil Drilling

*93AF0591D London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
4 May 93 p 3*

[Text] Cairo—Petroleum and Mineral Resources Minister Hamdi al-Banbi said that his ministry is making efforts to encourage the private sector to invest in crude oil exploration and drilling operations in different areas of Egypt and is striving to increase and attract investments by foreign companies in this sector. He said that

other areas of the world are competing to attract foreign companies, the most prominent being the republics of the former Soviet Union, which are now offering major facilities to foreign companies. In press statements regarding the Oil Ministry's implementation of the development program announced by President Husni Mubarak in early May 1993, the minister said that the implementation of the program to develop new natural gas finds will be expedited and gas will be linked to oil to encourage companies to make greater investments in the areas of [gas] development.

Dr. al-Banbi said that the ministry will strive to strengthen oil exports to bring in foreign currency to finance the 1992-1997 economic and social plan. The ministry will act to ensure that enough oil is exported for this purpose by substituting natural gas for oil in the production and services sectors to reduce domestic reliance on oil.

He said that, under the state-approved plan, the Petroleum Ministry will be able to provide oil and butane gas services and distribute oil products in newly built areas after they are developed within the scope of the relevant national program. He added that, in an effort to provide good service to residents, the number of butane gas filling stations and oil service stations will be increased, and new distribution outlets will be opened in all Egyptian governorates. Also, the private sector will be allowed to invest in these services and facilities without restrictions.

New Export-Import Law

93AF0591E London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
5 May 93 p 13

[Article by Sahar Fawzi]

[Text] Cairo—The Egyptian Government is now drafting a new export-import law which will grant incentives to exporters. The incentives will be funded by duties imposed on luxury imports and by fines imposed by the Subsidy and Market-Flooding Committee on goods imported for the purpose of flooding the Egyptian market.

Also, the Economy Ministry is studying the implementation of a new plan to double Egyptian exports within eight years to \$20 billion per year, compared to \$9 billion at present. The focus will be on exporting intermediate commodities and commodities produced by small industries which offer Egypt a relative advantage compared to other countries.

The new plan is based on coordination between the various state economic agencies, determination of their respective roles, and a greater role for the private sector, which is central to boosting Egyptian exports.

The plan is also based on the division of export activity into specific sectors, e.g., the textiles and ready-made

clothes sector and the food and agricultural products sector. The plan excludes oil and service exports.

An export target will be set for each sector to achieve an overall increase in exports of \$10 billion during the five-year period.

In another development, Egyptian exporters expressed displeasure with the Finance Ministry's decision to shift authority for refunding sales tax on Egyptian exports from the Customs Agency to the Sales Tax Agency. The exporters are upset because this change will complicate procedures and increase the number of documents which must be submitted, resulting in an increase in the cost of exports.

The exporters said that the Customs Agency refunds sales tax to exporters within 72 hours at most, whereas the procedures required by the Sales Tax Agency will lengthen this period to more than a week.

The exporters maintain that the state's plan to increase Egyptian exports should be based mainly on easing export procedures, granting incentives, and eliminating bureaucratic red tape in different ministries.

Food Companies for Sale

93AF0591F London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
7 May 93 p 3

[Text] Cairo—The Food Industries Holding Company in Egypt is in contact with a number of American and European consulting agencies to valuate the assets of the Edfina and al-Nasr Canned Food Company and the Kaha Fish Processing Company in preparation for offering these two companies for sale. These companies are among 11 subsidiary companies which will be privatized in the fiscal year starting in July 1993.

The list of 11 companies includes Egyptian Bisco Misr and Shamtu, the Egyptian Food Products Trade, Tanta Oils, the Oil Extracts Company, Cairo Oils, Alexandria Confections and Chocolate Company, and the Starch and Yeast Company.

A Food Industries Holding Company officer said that Egyptian consulting firms would also be used to valuate these companies, so that the foreign firms' appraisal would not be the sole basis for determining the companies' sale price.

He said that these companies' assets total about 2 billion Egyptian pounds, and that their latest balances show that some of them realize profits annually, whereas others suffer from an imbalance in their financing structures.

The source said that the assets of Edfina and Kaha, which are the first in line to be valued, are 166 million pounds and 149 million pounds respectively, for a total of 315 million pounds. Edfina's capital totals 43.5 million pounds, and Kaha's capital totals 28 million pounds. Edfina's output totals 94.2 million Egyptian pounds, and Kaha's output totals 76 million Egyptian

pounds. Their annual sales total 56 million pounds and 59.2 million pounds respectively.

Edfina's wages total 11.4 million pounds, and those of Kaha total 11.7 million pounds. Annual worker productivity in the two companies totals 21,140 pounds and 18,555 pounds respectively.

The last balance of the two companies shows that they suffer from a stock accumulation totaling 83,844,000 Egyptian pounds in Edfina and 63,835,000 pounds in Kaha.

The source said that the valuation of the companies will be based on the value of their fixed assets in current prices, which differ from the estimated prices on the company's financial books.

Meat Prices Raised

*93AF0591G London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
13 May 93 p 11*

[Article by Sabri al-Jundi]

[Text] Cairo—Cairo and other large Egyptian cities are seeing a sharp rise in meat prices (30 to 40 percent compared to last month) and a noticeable drop in meat supply, especially veal. A kilogram of veal sells in butcher shops in al-Duqqi [a residential area in Jizah] for 22 Egyptian pounds, compared to 16 pounds last month, and for about 24 pounds in butcher shops in al-Zamalik [an upper class district of Cairo].

Beef prices have also risen noticeably. A kilogram sells for 16 pounds, compared to 12 pounds last month.

Butchers expect meat prices to remain high with the approach of the holiday of 'Id al-Adha [Feast of Immolation], which is an important time for commerce and meat sales, especially the sale of sacrificial sheep and lambs.

Seasonal camel imports from Sudan to Egyptian markets have also fallen, from 60,000 to 10,000 per season, due to tension in Egyptian-Sudanese relations. This has led to an increase in the price of a kilogram of camel meat from six pounds to 10 pounds. The price is expected to continue to rise, reaching 12 pounds within the next few days.

The meat consumption of many people in low-income areas in Egyptian cities and in many Egyptian governorates is limited primarily to camel meat.

The drop in camel imports, combined with the export of domestic meat to a number of Gulf countries and the halt of the National Veal Project, have contributed to a sudden 1,500-pound increase in the price of a head of cattle to 4,000 pounds. Sheep prices have also risen substantially, following a shift by many meat raisers and merchants to exporting meat to Arab countries to realize a greater return.

The slaughter of cows, which is illegal, has become widespread due to the strong demand for veal, which has pushed up veal prices, especially in villages not easily accessible to state control agencies. This development is affecting the number of head raised in Egypt and the overall balance of livestock.

With the increase in domestic consumption, experts expect prices to continue rising unless the government intervenes, after the Egyptian Supply Ministry disassociated itself from the National Veal Project. That project consequently shut down completely.

To purchase their meat, Cairo and Alexandria residents have turned to the countryside, where a kilogram is about three pounds cheaper than in the two cities. Also, meat slaughtered in villages in the countryside is typically fresh, because it is sold immediately after the animal is slaughtered.

The General Federation of Egyptian Chambers of Commerce is calling for a suspension of sheep exports to make more sheep available for the rising [domestic] demand of the coming [holiday] period and to reduce pressure on the demand for other types of meat which have become scarce.

The rise in meat prices and the scarcity of meat has led to a recession in meat markets, particularly as many Egyptian families cannot buy meat due to their economic circumstances. However, with the approach of the 'Id al-Adha holiday, experts expect buying and selling activity to return to averages normal for this time of year, even if meat prices remain high.

At the same time, veteran livestock raisers have become very interested in cattle and buffalo raising, and new raisers have entered this area, against the backdrop of the continuous rise in meat prices. However, only veteran raisers are likely to be able to bear the growing cost of raising a single head, given their expertise in this area.

In a related development, the head of the Veterinary Services Authority, Dr. 'Ali Musa, emphasized that the penalty for violating the law against slaughtering female cattle is not a sufficient deterrent. As a result, there has been an increase in the number of violations committed by some butchers, especially in remote areas and low-income neighborhoods.

Musa rejected the idea of expanding livestock production. He said that Egypt is not a country of pastures, and that any expansion would come at the expense of agricultural areas planted with crops of greater importance to Egyptians. The alternative, Musa believes, is to provide for the maintenance and improvement of stocks and the protection of livestock in the country from diseases. He said that dangerous diseases, e.g., foot-and-mouth disease, brucella, and rinderpest [steppe murrain] have come under control.

In a related development, the chairman of the al-Ahram Consumer Collectives Company said that interest is

growing strongly in meat offered by the company's collectives, which costs more than 50 percent less than the market price. He said that the company's collectives sell a kilogram of beef for nine pounds, whereas butchers in low-income neighborhoods are demanding 14 pounds.

He emphasized that the consumer collectives still represent a price balancing factor, and that the price of beef in butcher shops would jump to more than 20 pounds per kilogram of beef if the collectives did not offer quantities daily.

He acknowledged that the company's collectives are receiving less meat at present compared to the corresponding period of 1992. He attributed the drop to the general cattle and buffalo shortage in Egypt.

Asyut Experience Said Needed for Interior Ministry

*93AF0590A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
4 May 93 pp 26-27*

[Text] As Major General Hasan al-Alfi left his post as governor of Asyut to move to Cairo to assume his new post as interior minister, fate had it that he was bade farewell in Asyut and welcomed to Cairo by two of the worst assassination incidents by extremists in Egypt. Assistant security chief of Asyut, Major General al-Shimi, fell victim to a bold assassination crime in Abu-Tij county two weeks before al-Alfi left Asyut, the capital of fundamentalist Islam in the south of Egypt. Al-Shimi's assassination was the first assassination by Islamists of a top ranking official in the Egyptian security apparatus. Only forty-eight hours after al-Alfi had assumed his new office in Cairo, the attempt to assassinate Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif in front of his house took place. Al-Shariif's house is only a few minutes away from that of Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi and from the headquarters of the Republican Guard. The minister's house is also located in an area where many of the Egyptian political and economic leaders live.

Aside from the new interior minister's bad luck, and as Islamic violence has risen in Egypt in the last ten years, a new rule seems to have taken effect regarding the top security post in Egypt. The rule, which has applied to the last three interior ministers, dictates that the minister climb the state security career ladder, then become the governor of Asyut, before settling in as interior minister in the famous Lazughli building in downtown Cairo. This route that interior ministers have been taking indicates two important facts: the first is Asyut's central location and importance to the wave of Islamic extremism; the second indicates the importance of confronting this wave.

The choice of the last three interior ministers, Zaki Badr, Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Musa, and Hasan al-Alfi, as governors of Asyut came at historic moments when security conditions in the governorate seemed in need of new strategies. For example, Zaki Badr was appointed in mid-1982 following the notorious violent events which

followed al-Sadat's assassination. More than one hundred security personnel were killed then. At the time, the new choice of governor seemed appropriate for dealing with the rise of terrorism. Badr was known for his toughness and his belief in an iron-fist policy. The choice of Major General Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Musa's as governor for the same region in October 1987 was also appropriate as viewed by the Egyptian decision maker. During that period there were differences between the Egyptian "al-Jihad" factions and the Muslim Brotherhood. Asyut was the scene of the most significant manifestations of this conflict. At the time, those who chose the governor found the local method of having a dialogue with certain factions while hitting hard at others the most appropriate for Asyut's security. The choice of al-Alfi, who was also known for his iron-fist policy, as governor in March 1990 also seemed in accord with the rise of violent events against both ethnic groups and the state in Upper Egypt's capital city.

Many factors effected the choice of the three governors as interior ministers. There was a big difference between Zaki Badr's administration of Asyut and that of 'Abd-al-Halim Musa's. Badr's administration started with what he called "shooting first," while that of Musa started with his positive response to requests from the wives of both the founder of the al-Takfir and al-Hijrah Organization [Repudiation and Renunciation Organization], Shukri Mustafa and his vice president, 'Abdal-'Aziz Bakri. Musa appointed the former's wife to a government post and gave the latter's wife an apartment owned by the governorate. The experience that the three governors acquired through their administration of Asyut seems to be the major reason for their assumption of the post of interior minister. This is because the three ministers had very little experience in the area of political security or state security before they assumed the post of governor of Asyut. However, because of the inflamed conditions in Asyut, the three governors had their first major experience in dealing with such situations.

The Asyut experience has undoubtedly influenced both previous ministers in their administration of the interior ministry and has also contributed to their departures. Major General Zaki Badr left only after ensuring the effectiveness of the policy of shooting first, which he had started in Asyut and then used all over the country. This policy ultimately failed and led to the extremists' increasing their violence and attempting three assassinations, two of which targeted former interior ministers: Major General Hasan Abu-Basha and Major General al-Nabawi Isma'il. The failure of his policy coincided with Badr's slip of the tongue and led to his dismissal. Major General 'Abd-al-Halim Musa continued in his persistent attempts to get to the extremists by negotiation and dialogue with some of their factions, while also continuing the policy of shooting first. Musa's policy had its roots in Asyut; he applied it when he became governor. The strategy of negotiating with the extremists led to Musa's dismissal. One week before his dismissal,

Musa had declared that he was negotiating with the imprisoned leaders of "al-Jihad" faction. At the time, the prime minister and those responsible for the state and its security rebuffed the negotiating policy; ultimately, it became clear that the failure of Musa's strategy and his dismissal were both directly linked to those negotiations.

The rule that "the road to the interior minister's job passes through Asyut," evidenced by the Egyptian security strategy of confronting the Islamic wave, indicates that interior ministry field experience is above any other considerations. Hopefully, the new interior minister, through this hypothesis, could strike the right balance and restore the missing stability to the banks of the Nile.

AL-AHRAM Chief Editor on Need for Social Programs

*93AF0580C Cairo AL-AHRAM WEEKLY in English
29 Apr-5 May 93 p 6*

[Article by Ibrahim Nafi']

[Text] I wrote recently ("New Priorities Ahead," AL-AHRAM WEEKLY 15-21 April) that the fight against terrorism calls not only for effective policing but also for measures to strike at the roots of certain fundamental problems that help to foster terrorism and extremism, and to stem violence, despair and extremism at source.

For this to happen, there will first have to be a reordering of priorities in our short-term development plans. We will have to put further large amounts of money into solving these problems and changing much of the background, throughout Egypt, against which terrorism and extremism have come to thrive.

As I said last time, this will require urgent additional funding and there are only two ways in which this can be found: either we draw down our cash reserves, with all the negative consequences that would have for the Egyptian pound, contingency planning and our financial and economic reform programme, or else Egypt's friends and brothers come to our rescue at this difficult time. By offering us the emergency funding we need they would be helping to maintain a strong and stable Egypt, which would be in everyone's interests, as we all share a common destiny and face the same threat from terrorism and extremism.

Egypt is at present the first line of defence against terrorism, and if it fails or weakens, terrorism will sweep over us all, threatening to destabilise the region as a whole. Although this is a joint responsibility, in all our interests, Egypt has as usual not waited for others but gone ahead with its own efforts to confront the problem. It is now the turn of other brotherly countries to support it, as it continues to strive for this shared national objective.

Let me give a few specific examples of what I mean by reordering our priorities, in order to give some idea of the costs involved.

Take, for example, the job of redeveloping the shanty-towns and slum areas which serve as breeding-grounds for terrorism and extremism. A list has been drawn up of the top ten priority areas nationally, which will need 1.4 billion Egyptian pounds of spending, not for superficial improvements but simply to create job opportunities for the young people living there, and to raise the standard of living in these areas to that of nearby towns and cities.

Then there is rural electrification, bringing civilisation to rural areas, and banishing darkness. Egypt has recently succeeded in bringing electricity to all villages of over 1,000 inhabitants, and 10,000 out of the country's 22,000 smaller villages and hamlets. This has cost 1.165 billion Egyptian pounds so far, and it will take another 1.8 billion Egyptian pounds to complete the job.

Electricity is more than just a basic service which everyone should receive. It is also a way of raising living standards and preventing rural-urban migration. More important still is the fact that it enables small and medium-sized industries to be set up in rural areas, providing local jobs that will benefit both young people and their communities, and save them from delinquency and extremism.

The same logic lies behind our efforts to improve education and build new schools with full modern facilities in rural and shanty-town areas, not just for educational purposes but also as a way of combating backwardness and extremism, and changing the environment that has helped to foster terrorism and violence. This too will require greater investment.

These are just three priority areas in which efforts are already beginning to be stepped up, in addition to all the other basic services like health, housing, roads and so on.

We have not expected any help in all these vital areas from our brothers so far, believing that each country should start to improve its own situation by means of its own efforts and resources before turning to others for help.

As I indicated in my previous article, we are now convinced of the need for change and improvement, and that the top executives who carry out this task will have to be selfless and devoted people, responsive to the wishes of the public, and capable of solving problems as they arise in accordance with the new priorities I have mentioned. All this will require a cohesive and coordinated executive team, united in its methods and objectives.

This does not mean that the present cabinet has not devotedly done all it could for the country in recent years. It has made great and strenuous efforts, borne tremendous burdens and played a positive and effective

role in serving society, increasing growth and productivity and carrying out economic and financial reforms. But that does not rule out calling on new elements who may be better able to achieve more, and meet goals more rapidly and cost-effectively, in a way that makes a clearer difference to people's lives.

The Egyptian administration requires greater discipline, firmer and prompter decision-making and a more innovative approach to problem-solving, while maintaining continuity in its policies and firmness in carrying out its plans.

I have given just a few examples of the additional costs we are going to have to bear in our comprehensive strategy for combating terrorism and extremism. It only remains for me to repeat that this is not just an Egyptian problem, but also a wider one. Anything that weakens Egypt weakens its brothers and friends too, and if terrorism and extremism should triumph in Egypt (God forbid), they will then turn and threaten their security, peace and stability as well.

Therefore, by helping us to bear the burden of defending Egypt's stability, they will be helping, indirectly, to defend their own stability and security. True brothers are those who translate their sentiments into action in times of trouble.

IRAQ

Indonesian Islamic Figure Defends Iraqi Position
93AE0481C *Baghdad ALIF BA'* in Arabic 10 Mar 93
p 12

[Article by Jawad Khalaf Salim: "The United Nations Has Forfeited Its Credibility"]

[Text] Riblin Sidi is a prominent political figure in Indonesia. He is past president of the Muslim Students Association, a large and prominent organization in Indonesia; member of the Indonesian Parliament for over a decade; and a writer whose articles are featured in more than one newspaper and magazine in Indonesia. During his last visit to Baghdad, ALIF BA' discussed the aggression against Iraq and the unequal policy practiced by the international organization.

He said the following: "We condemn the aggression Iraq is being exposed to, and we strongly regret the unjust standards pursued by the United Nations toward Iraq. America and its allies seek to assume complete control over the international organization to carry out their intentions, objectives, and ambitions, which are far removed from the slogans behind which they masquerade. The human rights they choose to defend with their guns and their awesome military apparatus prompt us to ask: 'Are there no human rights in Iraq, [a country] undergoing the most dreadful blockade known to mankind?' Where are rights in Bosnia, where they stand as spectators of the violations and crimes perpetrated

against Muslims there? Furthermore, what of the rights of the Libyan and Palestinian peoples? We in Indonesia are aware of the hidden aspect of the reality of the aggression against Iraq; thus we have decided to stand beside its people against the new imperialism led by America.

"We should realize that the end of the Cold War and collapse of the Soviet Union marked the start of a new phase that requires of all progressive forces to grasp the nature of the new confrontation between North and South. Thus, I believe that progressive and Islamic organizations and forces are moving at a snail's pace at a time when they should speed up, which compels us to reexamine the work of these organizations. For example, the Islamic Conference Organization, a large organization of many Islamic countries, nonetheless does not represent and reflect Islamic aspirations. This is due to the influence of the Gulf dollar. All of us are aware of how the ruler of Kuwait funded the last conference of this organization, which was held in Senegal, in order that the conference conclude with trivial resolutions that do not express the aspirations of [member] countries.

"These are undoubtedly resolutions that have been exploited to serve specific purposes that are removed from the overall interest of member countries. What is needed now is a renewal of this organization so that it will deal justly with Muslim issues and aspirations.

"What of the United Nations as an organization conceived to serve mankind? How numerous have been the international resolutions regarding Israel? There have been many, yet we find the United Nations motionless in confronting Israel's intransigence and refusal to implement these resolutions. Another example is what is happening in Bosnia: Serbian violations and killing and displacement of thousands of Muslims. We find the organization calm and patient, sending one delegate after another and convening one conference after another. Its patience is long whenever cease-fire agreements are violated; whenever a proposal fails, there is no harm in another attempt. On the other hand, this patience begins to wane whenever the matter concerns Iraq or Libya, or perhaps any nation that attempts to stand firmly against the West's attempts at domination. We thus find the international body active, effective, and expeditious, convening its meetings at a moment's notice, and concluding with obligatory and resolute decisions. Woe unto those who do not comply or are bold enough to breach these resolutions, at which instance the imperialist countries will not hesitate to dispatch their armies and navies thousands of kilometers over the widest seas and oceans. It is a game of double standards, and it is a bitter reality that we are assured of every day. Perhaps the latest gains of this policy are the procrastination and postponement currently taking place at the organization in implementing its sanctions against Israel as a result of not implementing Resolution 799 regarding the repatriation of more than 400 Palestinians to their residences. Thus the international organization

has forfeited its credibility, and no longer do people of this Earth look up to it as a pulpit for the preservation and defense of rights.

"Once again I emphasize the solidarity of the Muslim Indonesian people with the people of Iraq. This solidarity began after the aggression against Iraq, when thousands of Indonesian volunteers dashed to register their names to go to Iraq to fight alongside the Muslim Iraqi people against the imperialist forces."

Turkey Called To Help Against 'Secessionist' Kurds

93AE0475B London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 18 Apr 93 p 4

[Article by Kamran Qarah Daghi in London; 'Ismat Amsit in Ankara]

[Text] One day after Iraqi Kurdish leader Jalal Talabani left for Ankara, he announced that he would try to convince Kurdish Workers Party leader 'Abdullah Ocalan to extend the cease-fire in order to bolster the peace atmosphere in Turkey. But, Iraqi Ambassador in the Turkish capital, Rafi' Majawwil al-Tikriti, said that these efforts would be futile. He called on the Turkish government to normalize relations with Baghdad and to cooperate with it in order to confront the Kurdish "secessionist" activities in both countries.

Talabani, who arrived in Damascus the day before yesterday, said he is seeking to convince Ocalan to extend the 25-day cease-fire that was announced last month and expires next Thursday. He has spent one week in Ankara and had talks with President Turgut Ozal, Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel, his deputy Erdal Inonu, parliamentary speaker Cindoruk, and a number of Turkish and Kurdish party leaders. Al-Tikriti said in a statement to Turkish News Agency Anatolia that dialogue between Ankara and the Kurdish Workers Party will serve no purpose and that cooperation between the Turkish and Iraqi governments is sufficient to stop secessionist activities in both countries, adding that Talabani's ulterior motive is to establish an independent Kurdish state. "And if, God forbid, a Kurdish state is established in northern Iraq it will extend into Turkey. How can a secessionist in Iraq become an advocate of unity with Turkey? We do not consider Talabani to be sincere and, therefore, we should make it more difficult for those secessionists."

On the other hand, Turkish Government spokesman Minister of State Akin Gonen stated that Ankara decided to implement a series of measures to improve the economic and social conditions in the Kurdish area lying southeast of the country. He said the government decided to invest 234 trillion Turkish liras (\$26 billion) in 26 governorates in the coming five years. He said the investments' aim is to create new jobs in order to reduce rising unemployment.

These measures include giving the local administration authorities further powers to spend funds the governorate may need, without having to refer to the Central Government in Ankara, he added.

Furthermore, AL-HAYAH has learned that the new government in Iraqi Kurdistan will be formed today, Monday, under the leadership of 'Abdallah Rasul, known by his code name "Kawsart," succeeding the present government headed by Fu'ad Ma'sum. It is worth noting that the present agreement between the National Union of Kurdistan [NUK] and the Kurdish Democratic Party [KDP], who share the parliamentary seats, provides that the prime minister should belong to the NUK and his deputy to the KDP, while with respect to the parliamentary speaker and his deputy it is the reverse.

It was learned that the new cabinet will for the first time include a Turkman. Rasul offered the NUK the ministry of justice or the minister of public works, which it accepted in principle, but asked that the official announcement of its acceptance be delayed until after the party concludes its annual conference next Saturday.

Merchants Strongly Condemned for High Prices

93AE0495A Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 26 Apr 93 p 3

[“Less Than Zero” column by Sabah al-Lami: “In Prices, and Markets, and Merchants”]

[Text] Who is behind the price explosions? Whose hand is responsible for the complete absence of commodities and foodstuffs at certain times? Who are the people dominating this market to raise the price of a basic foodstuff, in the course of a few days, to three times its *artificial* price, not the true one it had before the sanctions disaster?

Where is the patriotism of these merchants? Where is that sacred faith that we heard when they pledged their desire to take part in securing food for their fellow citizens?

You merchants, you rich men, you with old and new fortunes, there were hundreds of thousands of you a few years ago—how many are there of you today? Were your possessions and bank accounts as massive as they are now?

Didn't most of you have nothing a few years ago? How did these millions flow into your hands? How have some of you become billionaires? Where did you get these palaces, which you built while sanctions were in force? Where did you get these cars that now cost in the millions?

Don't you remember the past, Oh merchants? Aren't you bound to the people by reasons beyond the fils and the dinar? Do you want to be mentioned in the history the Iraqis write of your victims? Haven't you thought about

after the sanctions? What about the day of judgment, of recompense and reckoning? Have you not heard the saying of the Prophet, 'Take pity on those on earth and pity will be taken on you in Heaven'? Aren't you touched by the hunger of a child, the poverty of a woman, the need of an old man, and the torment of the poor who are also sick?

What good are your millions, you 'merchants,' if Iraq is lost? What good will palaces, cars, buildings, bank accounts, and treasures do, if any of you should, God forbid, find yourself at the mercy of an arrogant American, British, or French officer who would turn you into a commissioned slave?

Believe me, when that happens, there will be no use being sorry, even had you paid redemption money with all the millions you have amassed—nothing but dignity and national sovereignty will protect the honor of merchants, guarantee their life of ease, and provide the bases for an honorable life that gives alms, is satisfied with a reasonable profit, rejects evil, and works with both hands to be a help to people, not a burden on them.

These questions and warnings are directed at merchants, those responsible for monitoring merchants, and those who have open or covert relations with merchants. We have been hearing incredible things about people playing with the market as if it were their own property. We do not recall so-and-so except by the commodity in which he was trafficking.

I do not want to leave this article trailing—that is, without saying something about the temporary solutions we might use under current law.

- Let us try to launch a campaign against cigarette smoking—ban it in cars, government offices, schools, and all public areas.
- Let us try closing coffeehouses except for evening hours.
- Let us try giving what we get to the cooperative societies and mandate fixed or variable monthly shares of supplies.
- Let us try banning the manufacture of all things such as sugar, shortening, and flour.
- Let us try restricting big restaurants before small ones.
- Let us try establishing an "agricultural army" of young people, supervised by the government—not merchants, peasants, or anyone else.
- Let us try giving ministers and public managers the power to release thousands of people their offices do not need, with their release to be considered 'semi-active service' without salary, as long as they are the ones requesting it.
- Let us try calling to account establishments that turn a blind eye to how their products reach people with exploitative middlemen and speculators.
- Let us try anything that might protect, reduce damage, organize the market, limit costs, and teach people to improve their lives with new thinking, new behavior, and new reckoning.

All we have to do is to learn, believe, and act in light of the profound and certain feeling that we are not in a brief, passing predicament; we are suffering the effects of criminal sanctions, and the crimes of sanctioners living in our midst. Thus we must confront the sanctions and the sanctioners in a determined way by shaming them. This requires new methods that we will come up with, just as we have come up with things we had never imagined we would be able to.

You merchants, who have made your livings from the people, go easy on the people. Desist from the scourge of prices on their backs. Remember that Almighty God abominates usury and usurers; remember the saying of the Prophet that "God loves generous men." Remember the poet's saying, "Oh gatherer in this world, give to others." And know that that which is gathered in sin will be lost through sin, and that he who encroaches on rights is really hurting himself; and that your Lord is mighty: an avenger!

Consumer Goods Supplied by Trade Ministry Companies

93AE0497B Baghdad AL-'IRAQ AL-IQTISADI
in Arabic 17 Apr 93 p 2

[Article entitled: "Review of Activities of Trade Ministry Companies"]

[Text] The three companies—for foodstuffs, grain trade, and grain production—meet more than 90 percent of the needs of local consumer demand for the commodities and supplies in which they deal. They meet the entire demand for some commodity groups, such as flour.

In order to strengthen measures for maintaining the volume of commodity supply, and to protect it from ups and downs and from its violation by some weak-spirited people, the Trade Ministry had decided to hold a regular monthly meeting of the branch directors of these companies, directors of monitoring and of supply centers in Baghdad and all the governorates, to review and coordinate action for the activities of these branches. The aim would be to perfect the congruence between the actual preparation process for citizens, through a network of agents and a number of holders of ration cards, to turn up instances of speculation, the repetition of made-up names, changes in the names of ration card holders, cases of deaths, and others.

Conference on Laser Applications To Be Held

93AE0598B Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic 21 Apr 93 p 7

[Article by Raha' Dawud: "Laser Applications Conference in Iraq"]

[Text] Entitled "Medical Laser Applications Develop and Strengthen Under the Patronage and Guidance of the Leader," al-Yarmuk Medical Department of the Ministry of Health, in cooperation with the Laser Research Center of the Atomic Energy Organization, will

hold the first scientific conference on Medical Laser Applications during the period 27 to 29 April 1993.

The conference seeks to strengthen dialogues and communications and to create opportunities for close cooperation among physicians, scientists, researchers, and those with engineering and scientific expertise, which would enable the Iraqis to break through the scientific siege imposed on our beloved Iraq. The conference is to focus on laser applications in medicine, medical laser applications in Iraq, laser applications for the diagnosis and treatment of cancer, laser safety considerations, and opportunities for cooperation between physicians and physiologists.

Reconstruction Achievements Enumerated by Minister

*93AE0483A Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic 10 Mar 93
pp 50-51*

[Interview with Mahmud Dhiyab al-Ahmad, Minister of Housing and Reconstruction by Siham al-Shujayri in Baghdad; date not given: "Reconstruction Achievements Enumerated By Minister"]

[Text] In commemorating the reconstruction campaign after the brutal aggression on our beloved Iraq, we have to resort to the housing and reconstruction ministry, which was named "the Reconstruction Ministry" during the campaign. The ministry contributed to the reconstruction of what the evil one destroyed. This has been a big experiment which really has given testimony to the innovative characteristics of Iraqis. The ministry, with its different departments, benefited from this experiment through experiences acquired during many days of strenuous and persistent work.

Remembering the days of struggle and building, the minister of housing and reconstruction, Mr. Mahmud Dhiyab al-Ahmad, sheds light on the lessons derived from the reconstruction campaign. He also responds to questions about residential complexes for citizens, means of obtaining construction materials, and other questions directed to him by ALIF BA'.

First, the minister spoke of the beginning of the reconstruction campaign indicating that the damage to structures, especially major bridges, had been heavy and devastating. In order to reconstruct these structures, accurate and detailed surveys of the damage had to be made so that designs could be made and scientific ways of repairing the damage could be found. We resorted to Iraqi consulting experts. Technical and engineering cooperation and coordination between executive and consulting agencies gave rise to exceptional Iraqi capabilities and energies. Thus, for repairing the damage, bold scientific solutions were taken that took into consideration minimizing both cost and time needed for execution and using the accumulated experience in this field. Previously, similar designs and solutions had been monopolies of foreign companies. Following the ministry's slogan "get on with construction," the technical and

executive branches of the ministry moved instantly and quickly to provide all necessary provisions for the campaign. Available potential in more than one area was tapped. A central operation center was established in the ministry. Plans and execution programs were drawn simultaneously with the start of work on the sites of damaged bridges and roads. Therefore, the nature and diversity of executed assignments led to the exchange and broadening of experiences of the technical personnel. The branches of the ministry had gained this experience through implementing technical projects that were not previously within their area of expertise, through great efforts to use local alternatives and through abundant inventories available at the ministry's different branches. All this led to the creation of good interaction between the different segments of the Iraqi society. Besides, it strengthened the belief and confidence that, because of Iraq's goodwill and great civilization, Iraqis are capable of overcoming the impossible. This was also true of the marvelous resistance Iraqis showed throughout the period of military aggression, treachery, and betrayal [war and the subsequent uprisings]. It also exemplifies the slogan of building and struggling that was raised by the Leader Saddam Husayn "may God guard and preserve him."

[Al-Shujayri] How did you implement the campaign for the repair of equipment and machinery?

[Al-Ahmad] The branches of the ministry own large stocks of equipment and machinery, which were handed over to them from the "abolished" organizations. At the beginning of 1991, there were 23,459 pieces. Many of them were badly damaged as a result of the American-European aggression. About 70 percent of this equipment and machinery was damaged when it was exposed to destruction and theft during the events of the betrayal and treachery. The ministry therefore took quick measures to repair and cut down the number of idle pieces of machinery and scrap the obsolete ones in order to increase the amount of machinery in good shape so it could be used in the reconstruction and building projects.

[Al-Shujayri] The reconstruction campaign has started and continues. Iraqis have learned many lessons from it. What lessons have they learned that might help in overcoming the obstacles and strengthen their understanding in the future?

[Al-Ahmad] Employees in any organization perform their jobs professionally. However, some perform their jobs with more precision than others and in good time. In this fashion, these latter professionals became involved in the reconstruction experiment while dedicated to the Leader and to the people. No one among us is negligent in doing his duty; even if such a person existed, punishing him or her would be of no use. I have been working in the ministry since the seventies, and I found that it was not the use of force against the person that makes work successful, but respect shown to the workers by managers. We therefore gave the ministry the

name of the Housing and Reconstruction Family with the goal of causing a feeling of both honest affiliation to this family and bonding together in order to restore services to the sons of Iraq. It is because of this that our ministry's performance became outstanding. We also succeeded in our work because we did not punish; instead we used the educational guidance method. For example, during the reconstruction of al-Sikka bridge in al-Samawi, there was an engineer, who I remember was called 'Ali, who had made errors in the implementation program resulting in delays in some phases. The ministry wanted to punish him. Instead, I sent him a letter telling him: "My dear son: I would like you to (refrain) from this deviation in the program implementation. We are watching you while you are out in the field." He then finished his job ahead of time and with great precision. On the opening day, this engineer told me that my letter had driven him to work very hard in order to keep his commitment. Had I punished him, he would have rebelled. This is one of the values that we tried to strengthen in the work-place. We learned from the reconstruction experiment how to deal with our field personnel. In this manner, we earned the satisfaction of our leader, who on all occasions speaks in favor of the ministry's good efforts.

[Al-Shujayri] Which bridges and buildings did the ministry reconstruct during the reconstruction campaign?

[Al-Ahmad] We have reconstructed all the bridges included in the reconstruction campaign except that of al-Karamah in al Kut, which will be reconstructed shortly. In addition, we will reconstruct all damaged roads, hospitals, schools, telephone exchanges, and television and radio stations, military factories, air bases, airplane shelters, and the justice ministry, local government buildings, the national command building, and the Conference Center. We will also repair al-Sujud Palace, the Cabinet building, al-Hadi Project, the Institute of Higher Education at al-Mansur, al-Jambu Reconstruction Project at Saddam Airport, and al-Qadisiyah-al-Hududi Complex at Taribil. Besides, we will reconstruct government buildings at Faydah and implement the following projects: the supply of drinking water to al-Basrah, the bridges on Saddam River, and the double-tiered al-Qa'id bridge, the projects of al-Ezz, Umm-al-ma'arik and al-Qadisiyah rivers, as well as the city of Saddamiyat al-Karkh.

[Al-Shujayri] What about alternatives?

[Al-Ahmad] Under the sanctions, our reconstruction needs were basically met through putting materials back in service and drawing engineering designs in such a way that we could make use of available materials in our warehouses, which we used according to a disciplined flow in the work program.

[Al-Shujayri] Are there any offers from foreign companies to reconstruct projects and buildings that were under attack?

[Al-Ahmad] Many foreign companies from Yugoslavia, France, and Britain contacted us in order to learn about our capabilities to rebuild damaged buildings and vital infrastructure. We responded by refusing any offer of foreign help, telling them that nothing was impossible for Iraqis as far as the damage caused by the evil ones was concerned. On this issue, we are armed with our leader's saying: "No to the impossible"

[Al-Shujayri] How do you compare your ministry's overall reconstruction achievements, efficiency, and speed with those of foreign companies?

[Al-Ahmad] In the past, we were in need of dollars so we asked foreign companies to reconstruct our damaged projects. However, faced with sanctions, we found that we were up to the challenge. We gave Iraqis the chance for self-expression, to prove their efficiency, and to express their patriotism in the manner they liked. Previously, Iraqis—and I am one of them—could not do what they were fit for, their potential was doubted, and they were afraid of failure. Presently, there is no place for foreign companies. Al-Jumhuriya Bridge has been reconstructed using 100 percent Iraqi labor. It was finished in five and one-half months, while previously it took four years—from 1953-1957—to reconstruct it. This comparison is proof of how well we have fared.

[Al-Shujayri] During the war, the Ministry of Reconstruction was credited with achieving a number of huge projects. However, the ministry's achievements during the previous few years was not apparent, a fact which gave rise to the issue of Iraq's dependence on foreign personnel. For example, why does the Ministry of Reconstruction not build residential complexes?

[Al-Ahmad] After the party's eighth national conference, the issue of building residential complexes was given a lot of attention. Certain sums were then allocated to the building of these complexes. The General Agency for Housing was established at that time. While it had a supervisory role and was assigned the task of providing plans and land as well as maps, execution was assigned to foreign companies. The Haifa Street, al-Sayidiya, and the 28 of Nissan residential complexes were built. We also attempted to implement these projects ourselves. As circumstances differ, we should not blame ourselves for any differences when comparing foreign companies' performance with ours. Later on, our personnel adapted to implement such projects. The laws of the ministry have also been changed. The housing ministry included more than seven organizations, which have been made into companies in which contributors have been given shares according to their efforts. At that time, the housing ministry built more than 570 units. However, these projects were stopped in 1987. Meanwhile, a comprehensive study has been undertaken relating to the building of these complexes, and it will be put into effect once the sanctions are lifted. These studies are ready to be executed at any time. For the time being, al-Idrisi Center for Engineering Consultations is continuously open for providing consulting services to citizens. The center has also

prepared a number of projects which it can offer and explain to citizens. After viewing the designs and learning about costs, citizens can choose the ones they like.

[Al-Shujayri] Why does the Ministry of Housing not take care of other governorates, especially paving existing roads and building new ones?

[Al-Ahmad] The Ministry of Housing implements many projects all over Iraq, especially the building and maintaining of roads. In 1993, we started by finishing the maintenance of rural roads and then allocated 28 million dinars for the maintenance of highways linking governorates.

[Al-Shujayri] What about implementing projects that were stopped during the attack?

[Al-Ahmad] There is a project for a 1,200-kilometer fast highway linking al-Basrah to Jordan and Syria. Before the events, we built 145 kilometers between ad-Diwaniyah and al-Nasiriyah. Presently, it has been halted. When economic conditions improve, we will restart.

[Al-Shujayri] Previously, citizens could approach the housing minister for help in building their residences. Now that materials are not available and have higher prices, could citizens still approach you for help?

[Al-Ahmad] When approached, I would tell citizens that we do not have any construction materials to help them, but once these materials become available and the public sector provided with all its needs, then we will not be restrained from helping citizens. As for now, the Consultation Center can offer citizens quick consultations twice weekly on Mondays and Thursdays. This is because it is very difficult to get steel for construction. During our project for developing al-Basrah University we needed 1,600 tons of reinforced steel; when we had no more steel in our warehouses, we were obliged to buy it from the private sector at a price of 25,000 dinars per ton.

[Al-Shujayri] We heard rumors among university engineering students that they would get practical training in current projects so that the ministry could benefit from their skills. How can you benefit from these students, and how can they be trained on your projects?

[Al-Ahmad] Since we started the reconstruction campaign, and at the beginning of the academic year, I met deans of all engineering schools and asked that they benefit from the reconstruction campaign to train students in its different projects. I further told them that a specialized committee should be established to draw precise training programs. We would send vehicles to transport engineering students to project sites. It was an excellent experiment. Nevertheless, universities denied its benefits, and though the reconstruction campaign is nearing its end, engineering schools do not want their students to benefit from it.

[Al-Shujayri] What about documenting the reconstruction campaign?

[Al-Ahmad] We tried to document all that was related to the reconstruction campaign according to codes followed during this period. I believe that reconstruction is an academic discipline that must be documented for the benefit of future generations. We were able to document this experiment mentioning those who took part in it and those who witnessed it. We also documented the seminars and letters were sent to the president telling him about achievements, project tours, and meetings.

ISRAEL

Arguments for, Against Elections in Territories Reported

93AA0066A Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (Weekend Supplement) in Hebrew 7 May 93 pp 11, 16

[Article by Tzvi Gilat]

[Text] At Sunday's weekly cabinet session, Shim'on Peres once again proposed advancing the idea of elections in the territories. Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin calmly received the proposal. Some of the ministers had no reaction at all, apparently because it was not clear to them just what the proposal meant.

The question of elections in the territories is one of the subjects perpetually raised at the bargaining table. Everyone knows that it is a serious matter that must be dealt with, everyone agrees that it is the heart of an arrangement between Israel and the Palestinians—but at this stage, the Israelis and the Palestinians have similar attitudes towards the idea: we want it very much, but we are not sure about now.

The issue was first raised in Israel's peace initiative of May 1989, which underlay Israel's willingness to take part in the Madrid conference. That initiative proposed that, as soon as the Israelis and Palestinians agreed on principles (of which the most important are a settlement in two stages, an interim agreement stage followed by discussions regarding a permanent settlement), preparations would begin for elections for residents of the territories.

The initiative provided that the voting would result in election of the Palestinian representatives to negotiations with Israel. These delegates also would manage the independent Palestinian ruling authority and conduct negotiations over a permanent settlement.

That is the reason that Peres so enthusiastically supports the idea of elections. The Palestinian delegation is weak, he argues. The big boss directing it is the PLO leadership in Tunis. If Israel wants to speak with the PLO, then it should establish that as its policy. If not, it must fashion a strong bargaining partner for itself because a weak one cannot make compromises and decide on concessions.

If the delegates were elected in democratic elections, they would make up a delegation enjoying broad public backing. It would have the authority to make decisions and adopt independent positions to the extent needed. Therefore, Peres believes, elections would advance the peace process.

Indeed, Peres contends, Israel has a fundamental interest in encouraging the democratic process within Palestinian society. He apparently is relying on the assumption, common among political scientists, that democratic societies do not make war on one another. They seek to settle their disputes through nonviolent means.

Prime Minister Rabin, in fact, was the mastermind of the 1989 Israeli peace initiative, when he served as defense minister. But at the current stage of the negotiations, Rabin is now prime minister, and he is cool towards the idea. In his view, efforts in this direction will divert the discussions from basic issues to questions of process and bring in through the back door controversial matters that are better avoided in the negotiations as they now stand. The most critical issue—the one that eventually shattered the national unity government—is the status of the residents of east Jerusalem. And the basis of his opposition may include notions once described by Henry Kissinger: "The moment you've combined territory, a leadership cadre and the democratic process, you've lost control of the territory."

As the negotiations already have clearly proved, procedural matters are actually matters of substance. Aside from the claim that working on elections is effort put into technical issues, the Israelis and Palestinians have expressed basic differences in approach towards elections.

Israel proposes elections resulting in a small, administrative body that will assume responsibility for the negotiations and manage the autonomy institutions. The Palestinians oppose that idea. They want to elect a legislative council of 180 representatives for autonomy. What they hope to achieve in this manner is clear enough—strengthening of the foundations of Palestinian identity. One hundred eighty is exactly the number of seats reserved to the residents of the territories in the Palestinian national council. Moreover, 180 is a fine number for parliamentary representatives, not for a clerks' council.

A parliament is important to the Palestinians as a mark of sovereignty. The Palestinians want legislative authority conferred on the elected assembly. Israel is opposed; law-making authority is a bridge to sovereignty. The Palestinians are aided, therefore, by a pragmatic argument. It is impossible in general elections to elect someone who will be responsible for public health services or social welfare. Such a function must be performed by professionals, and only a legislative body can appoint and bestow authority on them.

East Jerusalem? The Palestinians are sticking to their position that east Jerusalem is part of their national

community. Israel recently has proposed granting residents of east Jerusalem the right to vote but not the right to be elected. The Palestinians say, it is clear to us that anyone who can vote also can be elected. That is democracy. It is equally clear to us, and must be also be clear to Israelis, that the autonomy institutions will operate in practice from east Jerusalem, even if it remains at this stage under Israeli jurisdiction.

As noted, even if a compromise proposal on these questions were to be offered, both the Palestinians and the Israelis prefer to postpone elections for now. Both sides, it seems, are interested in free and democratic elections—but both want "the right people" to be elected. Read: followers of the PLO's central stream, supporters of the peace process. Not Hamas, not the refusal front.

A poll recently conducted by a number of researchers from Bir-Zeit University produced results that were especially discouraging on this score. Twenty-five percent of all residents of the territories support the peace process while 29 percent oppose it. The rest are undecided.

The Palestinians argue that to assure the election of supporters of the peace process, this silent majority, nearly 50 percent, must be given the feeling that the peace process is worthwhile.

Thus, both Israelis and Palestinians now attach great importance to humanitarian gestures and to a swift transfer of some administrative authority in the territories. The more long-time exiles who are permitted to return, the more families allowed to reunite, construction permits issued and tax burdens eased, the more supporters of the peace process will be able to show results to potential voters and encourage them to vote in the elections as a general matter and, in particular, for the right people.

Until 1987, elections were regularly held in the territories for voluntary organizations, trade unions, chambers of commerce, bar associations, and engineering boards. The results of these elections provided an indication of internal lines of power. With the outbreak of the intifadah in 1987, these elections were suspended as a sign of mourning.

The process has been renewed in the past two years. The results of the elections for chambers of commerce demonstrate a huge growth in power for Hamas, not for religious reasons but as a display of despair with the PLO's political line. In Ramalla, for example, a liberal area with left leanings, Hamas won a decisive majority in the elections for chamber of commerce even though many Christians live there. The reason: Hamas took a pragmatic line. It demanded a reduction in the number of general strike days called by the national command. For merchants, who think first about business, that was just the thing.

Now people are trying to avoid a situation in which Hamas joins with the refusal front to obtain a majority.

When former Defense Minister Moshe Arens agreed to elections in the territories, he meant only municipal elections. That is no longer on the agenda. The elections now under discussion look to be the first step towards general, regional elections. By a schedule still to be decided, representatives will be elected from all districts. The conditions of the elections, which are acceptable to Israel, are removal of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] from population centers during the election campaigns and the elections themselves, and international supervision of the elections and their results.

If there are to be democratic elections—Palestinians say—there must be freedom of expression, association, and advertising. To a relative degree, Israel has already begun to move a certain distance towards the Palestinians on this issue. Censorship over opinion columns in local newspapers has been eased and party conventions have been held without interference. Two official parties were established this past year, the "People's Party," an arm of the Communist Party, and the "Democratic Unity Party," founded by activists of 'Abd el-Rabu's wing of the Democratic Front.

As for campaigning, it is apparent to Israel that "we'll have to close our eyes a little because not everything that will be said will be pleasant for us," as an official assigned to this task put it. Officials of the civilian administration, who have closely followed local elections recently held in the territories, assert that the Palestinians understand the rules of the game, what is allowed them and what is forbidden.

At Al-Najah University's elections, for example, the organizers made sure to encircle the school grounds with jute cloth, possibly so that no one could see how people were persuaded to vote by means that surely are not democratic, and certainly so as not to draw the attention of IDF observers to Palestinian flags flying on the campus, which would require them to take action.

It goes without saying that there also are reservations of a personal nature. For the PLO command in Tunis, it is not entirely clear that they will be able to determine the results. They will, of course, offer advice from there on lists of candidates in each of the localities—but it is each man for himself at the poll. Many of the delegates to the peace talks are definitely aware that their position in the voting is shaky. Hanan Ashrawi, to give one example, stands tall with the Americans, and may be acceptable to the Israelis, but she has precious little popular support. And that is just one example.

In any case, it is instructive to see that Israelis and Palestinians hold very similar views regarding the nature of Palestinian democracy at this stage. Far more than they resemble Western democracy, these views resemble a popular democracy whose expressions are more formal than a statement of the spirit of democratic ideals.

Commentary Views Military Rule in Territories

93AA0068A Tel Aviv *YEDI'OT AHARONOT* in Hebrew
2 May 93 p 3

[Article by Avraham Tamir: "Do Not Rely on Dreams"]

[Text] Some assert that the Begin government, by relinquishing all of Sinai for peace, created a precedent that could have been avoided. The precedent is to our disadvantage, they say, when we conduct peace negotiations with Syria.

It is hard to know whether this is said in order to prepare the way for the evacuation of all or part of the Golan. But it is important to know that the leaders of Israel knew, since the Six Day War, that we would have to return all of Sinai, and they preferred partial agreements, only because of the apprehension, for internal reasons, about dealing with the evacuation of Sinai.

Meanwhile, the Government of Israel signed, with an absolute majority in the Knesset, the Camp David Agreement, which is a framework agreement for an inclusive peace on the basis of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. Whoever reads the agreement as it stands, and not according to his longings, will find in its principles that establish in a clear way, unambiguously, that Security Council Resolution 242 in all of its aspects (meaning also the return of territories for peace) applies to peace negotiations with every Arab state that borders on Israel and also on the negotiations for the determination of the permanent status that will prevail in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip after the period of autonomy.

Therefore, the central problem in the peace negotiations with Syria will be whether to insist on a partial agreement, for ideological reasons or due to internal difficulties—or to return all of the Golan in exchange for full peace.

The central problem in the negotiations with the Palestinians will be the essence of the autonomy as a transition period. For it is impossible not to think where an interim agreement, in which 2 million Palestinians are involved who will reside in the areas of the autonomy, will lead.

It is understandable why those who believe in annexation as the permanent status of the areas of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza insist that the source of the authority of the autonomy will be the Israeli military government, until it is replaced by Israeli sovereignty. But it is also desirable to understand why such a solution is an empty dream: according to the Camp David Agreement, the permanent status is to be determined by agreement, and no side to the negotiations can impose it unilaterally.

On the Palestinian matter, the assertion also is heard that according to 242, there is no Palestinian side to the negotiations over the permanent diplomatic status, and that the sides to the negotiations are the states from which we conquered the territories. From this stem two

possibilities: one, to determine by agreement a diplomatic formula for a permanent solution of the Palestinian problem, and to establish the agreement between the sides as the source of the authority for the diplomatic formula that will be determined. A second possibility: to return all the territories to Jordan (Judaea and Samaria) and to Egypt (the Gaza Strip) with agreed border changes. If the second possibility will be preferred, it is clear that these two states will transfer the territories to the Palestinians, so that from the womb of the autonomy, a Palestinian state will be born, which, as has already been agreed between them and the PLO, will become part of a confederation with Jordan and, possibly, also with Israel.

The confederation formula was chosen not only because of Israel's opposition to a completely independent Palestinian state, but also mainly because that is the correct formula for demographic, economic, and security considerations.

It is preferable to arrive at an agreement on the permanent status in which the Palestinians are a party to the negotiations—and the Camp David Agreement makes this possible—than to chose the second way, which is a territorial agreement with Jordan and Egypt, after which they will establish a Palestinian state.

In any event, an Israeli military government cannot be the source of the authority of an autonomy that is marching towards political separation from Israel, and the interim agreements in the areas of security, economics, state lands, and water must be a stage towards good neighborly relations between states and not between ruler and one who is ruled against his will.

Rapprochement With Hamas by Releasing Yasin 93AA0039B 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 4 Apr 93 p 9

[Article by Avner Regev: "A New Path in Political Thought"]

[Text] Prime Minister Rabin's appearance on television last Tuesday, the day when the two policemen were murdered near Hadera, was one of the climaxes that such phenomena occasionally break [as published]. The closure of the territories, which the prime minister decided upon together with the political cabinet, [and] that includes instructions to the military to "keep a lighter finger on the trigger," is an immediate result of the deteriorating defense situation, in the territories and within the Green Line. This situation required a television appearance by the prime minister, in order to attempt to calm the mood of rage and to demonstrate leadership and determination, in light of the sense of crisis that has emerged among the public.

Nothing can be done against the incessant murderous attacks, apart from closing the potential murderers behind fences and eliminating any possibility of committing their wicked deeds. At the same time, we must continue to pursue every avenue of dialogue. This will

lead the other side to exercise careful consideration prior to continuing acts of killing and murder that do not beget any solution.

Land Day was commemorated on the same day that the prime minister made his statement to the nation. A violent incident developed at the central event in Shefaram between members of Hadash [Democratic Front for Peace and Equality] and the members of the Islamic movement, in light of the statements made by MK [member of Knesset] Toufiq Zi'ad. The cause of the violence that developed is entirely immaterial. The important thing is that the clash between the two camps lent expression to the great tension existing between them. Land Day is a landmark shared by the Arabs of Israel, regardless of political differences. This time, for the first time, the members of the Islamic movement rioted. In the midst of MK Toufiq Zi'ad's speech, they attempted to prevent him from continuing. Thus, they emphasized the great contrast between the two movements more than in any verbal fashion.

Similar tension, more violent, also exists in the territories. Hamas [Islamic Resistance Front] is attempting, and sometimes also succeeds, to lead the struggle against the Zionists and to rob the PLO of its leadership. The great difference between the two is that the PLO is willing to conduct political negotiations with Israel, while the Hamas negates any dialogue whatsoever. The activity of the Hamas has an impact on the Islamic movement in Israel, and is influenced by ideas from other Islamic movements throughout the Arab world. Consequently, it increases its murderous activity, which brings terrorism and fear of both Hamas and the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] upon the Palestinian population in the territories. This situation requires that the policymakers in Jerusalem prepare themselves for different political thinking.

It would be worthwhile to start examining the possibility of a change in the political situation and test under what conditions it would be possible to maintain some sort of relationship with Hamas, in order to limit the murderous blows. For if they are not stopped, they may elicit a response that might be almost tantamount to total war. Thus, they will bring the defense situation to a low that we have not experienced since the war in Lebanon.

For years, the relationship with the PLO or with its supporters in the territories and elsewhere were considered to be totally prohibited. Even when there were those who called for a dialogue with the nationalist element in Palestinian society, before the religious—fundamentalist faction gained strength, governmental response was totally negative, and the argument was not accepted. Now, with fundamentalism on the rise, and its supporters committing murders, the natural tendency is to fight against them, because "there is nobody to talk with and nothing to talk about"—such a familiar argument, from the not so distant past.

But if we deviate from routine thinking, it is possible that there is a possibility of releasing the leader of Hamas in the Gaza strip, Sheikh Yasin, from prison, in exchange for a declaration from him that the terrorism and murders be stopped. Another idea could lead toward the heads of the Islamic movement in Israel, in order to utilize their services as a lever for a dialogue with figures from Hamas, to bring them to an understanding that the murderous terrorism that they exercise will only aggravate their suffering and will not lead to any solution desirable to the Palestinians. Thus, it would perhaps be possible to embark upon a road that had not yet been tried, in order to arrive at an objective determined by the Rabin government upon its ascent to power—the attainment of maximum security within the framework of peace treaties or within the framework of other accords.

The idea of seeking means of a dialogue with Hamas may not be liked by many, and rightly so. But the political establishment must plan its steps so that they will fit in with the supreme interest guiding it, which is maximum security for every resident and for the entire country.

The main enemy today is Hamas. Therefore, if Israel decides to fight it, it must try to make progress in the political process with the members of the nationalist faction. Fighting everybody, all of the time, will not lead to a decrease in terrorism and will not further the defense of Israel.

More than 20 years ago, the internal security situation was much worse. Armed cells penetrated [Israel's borders] and we were subjected to attacks and murders almost every day. It now appears as if we are suffering from "material fatigue" and that our threshold of suffering is much lower. Therefore, the political process is the light at the end of the tunnel. The political process with the PLO or the attempt toward a dialogue with Hamas.

Golan Residents View Means To Fight Withdrawal

93AA0068B Tel Aviv *YEDI'OT AHARONOT* in Hebrew
7 May 93 pp 6-7

[Article by N'omi Levitzki: "The Golan's Distress"]

[Text] These are difficult days for the residents of the Golan Heights. Even the most cynical of visitors cannot ignore the pain, even the most determined of the supporters of peace with Syria will find it difficult not to understand. Because they themselves are torn in a sharp internal debate: peace versus the Golan, peace versus home, from their viewpoint.

Distress is the key word here now, uncertainty is the existential situation, and the world is upside down. In one day it is possible to meet Moshe Mazor from Katzrin, a clear Beginist, a scion of a revisionist family, who supports complete withdrawal in exchange for a full peace, and Mark Miller, a moderate kibbutznik, who prefers the Golan without peace to peace without the

Golan. Neither this one nor that one know what the next day will bring. They are living as if on suitcases.

Tuesday this week, just like the weather, began well and ended badly. Minister of Finance Beyge Shohat arrived for a visit. Beyge, the man with his hand on the till, holds the key to the development budgets. And on the Golan today, a large budget for development means hope. So at the beginning of the visit, the sun was still shining.

First they took Shohat to the technology incubator in the industrial area of Katzrin. Approximately 60 Russian scientists are working in the incubator on all kinds of innovations, mainly in the area of chemistry. The owners, the Company for Developing the Golan, want to convert the development into production. That is, to enterprises on the Golan Heights. For that, money is necessary, and money is Shohat.

The minister was welcomed by Uri Me'ir, a former member of the Jewish underground, who has been director-general of the Company for Development for three years. It was strange to see Beyge Shohat striding in the hallways of the technology incubator with Uri Me'ir at his side. I asked his assistant Bo'az Rada'y if he knew who Uri Me'ir is. The name is familiar to me, said Rada'y, scratching his head a little.

I asked Samy Bar-Lev, head of the Katzrin Council, why they had not organized a little demonstration against Shohat. A demonstration, said Bar-Lev in astonishment, why should we demonstrate against Shohat, he has not done anything bad to us. If Shahal were to come, we would demonstrate. He is a representative of the government, I said to Bar-Lev, one demonstrates against a government. "There are bad ones in the government," answered Bar-Lev, "and there are good ones." In the morning, Shohat was still counted as one of the good ones. In the evening, it seemed to me, he was already marked as one of the bad ones.

One way or the other, after a brief tour of several laboratories, the honored person went up to the second floor, to the conference room. On the table were plates piled with cookies, and next to them were pitchers of juice. A giant board with lots of data was hanging on the wall. They seated Shohat precisely opposite the board.

An optimistic group. On the board was exact planning of the development plans for the coming years. Depending, of course, on the budget. In 1994, for example, they want to add 450 jobs, and in 1996 another 250. Shohat looked at the board in disbelief. But you know there is a problem, he said to them.

What is the problem, asked Me'ir. Shohat looked back towards his assistant Rada'y. They did not hear about Washington, he said, and tried to smile. Shohat, a good-natured guy with a generous sense of humor, sought to maintain a relaxed atmosphere. Afterwards, his face darkened a bit. Seriously, gang, he said almost in pleading, you know that there is a problem. Why, it is impossible to ignore it.

In the evening, at the end of the tour, all of the economic functionaries in the Golan met for a concluding meal with Shohat in the Kinar Guest House. While waiters with yarmulkes placed before the diners plates overflowing with portions that appeared unidentifiable to me, Shohat made the concluding speech.

He tried to administer the bitter pill with a teaspoonful of sugar. "You tell me. Would not the government behave irresponsibly if it granted your requests, and in another year made the decision to evacuate? You must continue to live and it must be made possible for you, but a breakthrough in investments, that is another story."

"There is Washington, there are negotiations, and you want to invest in a barn, to invest in greenhouses, to paint the roofs red. I am not a man with good tidings. There is no decision that will make you happy. Anyone who goes around here and sees things, his heart aches, but when they are measuring the peace on the other side—I do not know."

One of those sitting at the table whispered to me that it is too bad that Peres is not prime minister, for if Peres were prime minister, Rabin, the known security advocate, would oppose every move of Peres in the Golan, would fight like a tiger against any movement on the Heights.

Here We Don't Need Arms Caches

I went to Uri Me'ir following the declaration of Ze'ev Greenfeld of Neveh Ativ. A threat of a new underground is reminiscent, of course, of the previous one. Me'ir, a member of Ramat Magshimim, sat in prison a year and a half. Today it can be said that he is a rehabilitated prisoner. Me'ir would actually prefer to forget that chapter of his life.

I asked him if a new Jewish underground were possible, if there were truth in the rumor that residents of the Golan are caching weapons. Me'ir laughed. "There is no need to stockpile here in caches," he said. "Everyone has weapons. This is a line of confrontation area, and everyone has military weapons at home. There are many who have private weapons. A lot of people bear arms here."

Me'ir is angry. Every time that some Ze'evik Greenfeld or Micha'el Ben-Horin lets loose some idiocy, he says, they all jump and shout right away underground, the noise goes up immediately, things start up immediately. Here, another underground is beginning. "It is not fair. You might think that there are in the Golan compensation seekers or an underground."

[YEDI'OT] Do you know of something that is being organized? And if you knew, would you go to the police?

[Me'ir] I am not part of that anymore, I do not know anyone who is involved in that. I am acquainted with Ben-Horin and Greenfeld, and neither of them would

shoot at soldiers, neither of them is organizing. If someone were to organize, I would interfere with it, but I do not want to answer the question whether I would go to the police."

[YEDI'OT] What will you do if the government decides to evacuate the Golan?

[Me'ir] Ge'ula Cohen asked me that question for the first time regarding Yamit. I said to her that I did not believe that they would evacuate. I do not believe now that they will evacuate the Golan, and if it falls on me, I do not know how I will act. Of course, there are red lines. We learned our lesson. I was punished, I sat in prison. We had a seminar and it is over. My father almost had a heart attack when he saw me in the Russian Compound.

But in the final analysis, there are two possibilities for this state. You cannot play with people. Let them stop investing here and begin to hand out compensation. Look at what is happening here. They are expanding and building enterprises and apartments and investing money. One thousand and seven hundred apartments await occupation. I believe that the development will halt the withdrawal.

[YEDI'OT] So you are tranquil?

[Me'ir] Mr. Rabin is not the leader of stature who is capable of making such a decision. Begin, when he made the decision for withdrawal from Sinai, it was a decision that required very courageous leadership. Rabin is not capable of that. He makes decisions only on the level of shooting from the hip.

If, heaven forbid, I am wrong and there will be a withdrawal anyway, I assume that everyone will [text illegible] in his own way. One will demonstrate, another will be evacuated quietly, but there will be no civil war. We have lost a sense of proportion. Every nut who says something, it becomes an underground, a headline in a newspaper, and a parliamentary question in the Knesset.

[YEDI'OT] Nevertheless, it has already happened and you were inside. It is hard to say that there is no prospect of that.

[Me'ir] What was termed the Jewish underground was after the attack at Hadassah House. Friends from Hebron approached me, that we should assist in attacking the heads of the Committee for Islamic Direction. Blood was hot and the head was mischievous and we said that we would help. I know all of the nuts here in the Golan. They, too, are Jews and they spare Jewish lives. There is no Jew here who would harm a Jew.

The Process Is Bigger Than They Are

Local politicians are making a real effort to resolve differences, to present a united front, but the stitching is crude and irregular. Take, for example, Uri Z'kharya, a Likudnik, a member of the Katzrin Council. I found him

NEAR EAST

repairing the roof of his home, a small house with red tiles at the outskirts of one of the newer neighborhoods in the city.

Simple logic says that a fellow like Z'kharya would take his place at the spearhead of the struggle, at the side of the head of the Council, Samy Bar-Lev, who also is a Likud member. But on the Golan, logic and life do not always go together, and Z'kharya is more oppositionist than the opposition. While he opposes withdrawal strongly, he opposes the way of struggle no less strongly.

"The slogan: 'Peace With the Golan,'" he says "is prattle meant to maintain the consensus between the left and the right on the Golan. We need to call a spade a spade. In the coming decade there is no possibility of a situation in which any Syrian leadership will arrive at a peace agreement with Israel without receiving all of the Golan. It must be stated bravely whether we want peace or we want the Golan. You cannot have both."

In about a week, the Likud convention will open in the park of ancient Katzrin. It will be the first appearance of 'Ezer Weizman as president of the country. In the nature of things, his expected speech is arousing great interest. About a year ago, Weizman told Eli Malka, the head of the Committee for the Golan, that he was an obstacle to peace. The lord knows what he will say this time.

But Z'kharya does not have a problem with Weizman. Bibi Netanyahu interests him more. "Netanyahu comes to the Golan when he has an opportunity for public relations," he says. If they grant the right to speak at the convention, he will settle an account with Netanyahu. He will tell him to please stop blabbing about the Golan and start to act. He should organize a Betar nucleus, he should establish a settlement, he should bring investments, he should do something. "What a stupid thing it is to say that Rabin does not have a mandate. Certainly he has a mandate. He [text illegible] here, he is prime minister, and he was elected. So Rabin, who conquered the Golan, sits there. He understands defense affairs, and if he takes such a step, and decides on withdrawal from the Golan, it will be judicious. But I, for example, a resident of Katzrin, think that it is forbidden in any way to bungle the process. He is not the only one here."

At the beginning of the week there was an emergency session of the plenum of the councils. There are two councils on the Golan Heights. The Katzrin Local Council and the Golan Regional Council. There was an air of urgency. Reports from Washington were optimistic, and the pendulum of tension between Washington and the Golan Heights works inversely. When tension goes down in Washington, it goes up on the Golan.

The session was stormy and lasted for hours. Four, maybe five, perhaps even six. Did anyone count? Z'kharya said there that they had to stop wasting public money on giant advertisements that show Rabin with Dar'owsha, it is not fair, it does not work, it actually works against us." [quotation marks as published]

"Between us," he said, "there are no journalists here and no talking. You are telling Rabin that he should go back to the people. Let us assume that he does, and what will the people say? The people will say Rabin again. Is there someone in this room who really thinks differently?" From Z'kharya's viewpoint, the local leadership has not succeeded in convincing even the people of the Golan that it is possible to stop the process.

Consequently, he says, the residents of the Golan are not responding. A few months ago, the members of the committee conducted a fundraising drive in Katzrin. Approximately 4,500 persons contributed less than NIS [new Israeli shekels] 10,000. They are also not running to demonstrations. "For two demonstrations we gathered children from the schools and transported them there. I do not know if that was moral, but we gathered them, so there were people.

"The rest of the demonstrations were flops. About two weeks ago only a handful of persons left Katzrin for a demonstration in Jerusalem. They could have been transported in my Transit. The message is clear. I ask people why they do not come. They tell me that they love the Golan, but they see that the process is bigger than they are."

The Lesson of Gamla

This week, the students of Dr. Perry Kedem, of the Institute for Social Research at Bar-Ilan, conducted a sort of mood survey on the Golan. Third-year psychology students. In the kibbutzim they were not willing to answer the questions. They went to Katzrin. It is not a representative sample, and there will be an analysis of the research only in another month, but a first glance at the forms shows that the respondents feel betrayed and threatened.

In contrast to Uri Me'ir, Z'kharya thinks that there are people on the Golan who will take up arms. At the plenary session of the councils not a small portion of the discussion was devoted to Greenfeld's statement. One by one, those present stood up and expressed their opinions. Almost all of them condemned [it], some of them aggressively, some with a certain gentleness, but all denounced [it].

An attorney, Yo'av 'Efron of Katzrin, refused to denounce [it]. You are mistaken, he said to his comrades, when you denounce Greenfeld. It is a mistake. 'Efron is considered to be especially extreme, but Z'kharya fears that there will be persons who take up arms. "I fear that there will be crazy incidents here. I do not know who they will shoot at, but they will shoot."

"There is a population here that was brainwashed. That the Golan is an inseparable part of holy Israel." Z'kharya refers to a number of religious settlements in the Golan, settlements that are part of Gush Emunim. Nav stands out among them. Also, the Jewish underground was born there. It may be assumed that one or another kind of

security force is now watching more carefully those settlements that are seen as likely trouble spots.

Z'kharya says that everyone in the Golan has already learned by heart the story of Gamla. "A known historical story. Katzrin surrendered and lived under Roman rule, Gamla dug in and all of its inhabitants died. From this story, everyone can draw a conclusion one way or the other. Katzrin also disappeared in the end."

The Committee of Golan Settlements also chose to learn something from history, although from more recent history. The story of the settlement of Kadum is now of more interest to them. Yehuda Wolman, a member of Kibbutz Merom Hagolan and head of the Regional Council, says that the committee has decided to establish two new settlements in the northern Golan.

One nucleus, members of the settlements of the Gush in the region, sits already in readiness in Moshav Odem, waiting for the green light. A second nucleus, in part members of Neve Ativ, in part from outside of the Golan, is now actually crystallizing. Wolman says that he hopes to receive government approval for the new settlements. I asked him what he would do if the government did not approve.

Wolman rolled his eyes heavenwards, as if to say: it does not approve, they will go up without approval. "I have red lines in the struggle. We will not lift a hand against anyone, everything must be conducted democratically. But a party is not a home. Meanwhile, we are struggling within the party, but that is not a red line."

The voice is that of Wolman and the hands are the hands of Gush Emmunim. A few days ago, Rabin, for the first time, called the settlers of the Golan "settlers". Apparently, he knew why.

Prospects for Economic Growth Assessed

93AA0079I Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (Weekend Supplement) 21 May 93 pp 8-9

[Article by Sever Plotzger: "The Economy: A Map of the Dangers"]

[Text] There has been much talk among us recently about "a continued trend of rapid economic growth," and about the prosperity that almost cannot be avoided. The ministers of the government are talking about it, their officials are joining in, their advisers are nodding their heads. You travel the length of Israel, and see with your eyes the real signs of this growth. A fever has taken hold of the roads—surveying, excavating, paving, building. Momentum.

Together with the heavy investments in infrastructure, which are intended to close a gap of 30 years in three years, you read and hear about a balanced government budget, about additional jobs in the business sector, about the decline in the immigrants' unemployment rates, about a surge in industrial production and in

industrial profitability, and for desert you hear a whisper also about the tremendous interest of the world in the investment possibilities that will be created here after the peace, of course.

Nice, springtime things, which are unpleasant to spoil. And yet, the date of the renewed take-off of the Israeli economy is still very much not final. All of the optimists may be correct, and would that were so. But they are also liable to turn out to be wrong. The skies of the Israeli economy are covered with heavy clouds, not characteristic of this season, and they are very real. They will not disperse by themselves. There are dangers, which it is impossible to ignore.

So, where do we stand? I want to use this time, only this time, the worn, used, outmoded expression—a crossroads. We are standing, the Israeli economy is standing, at a crossroads. You and I, children of the economy.

A map of our dangers follows. Read it and beware.

Constant Nervousness

In 1992, the Stock Exchange in Tel Aviv was one of the best in the world, with soaring share prices and rising bond prices. In the first half of this year we were rudely expelled from the elite, and Tel Aviv was one of the world's worst exchanges. Both stocks and bonds were disappointing.

The exchange, in general, was not quiet, restless, hopping from one foot to the other. The experts used the sexy term "selectivity" to describe a situation in which some of the shares rose while others fell; the nonexperts said that the exchange had panicked.

Not only declarations and leaks led to the erosion of the stock market. Real economic and business factors are operating here.

—Balance sheet analysts of corporations listed on the exchange read the financial statements for the final quarter of last year and the first quarter of this year, met with management, and drew their conclusions: the large concerns, the hippopotomuses of the Israeli business sector, had already attained peak efficiency. They had done everything they could, drank all the water that they could, ballooned as far as possible, and now they could not move. Without deep structural and organizational changes, they are liable to begin to decline. They are struck by the sickness of excess weight and degeneration, which blighted the American and European corporations.

But the solution is not to switch from "heavy" stocks to "light" ones. The players in the capital market say that too many reforms are planned here for the coming summer. A reform in the provident funds, a reform in the banks' real holdings, a reform in the pension funds, a reform in the mutual funds, and, above all, like a long and threatening sword, the reform of all reforms—taxation of the Stock Exchange and the capital market.

Show us, if you will, one other exchange that could breathe in conditions of such thick and heavy uncertainty, said these players. We have been confronted for many months by attacks of confusion. The natural response is to hunker down.

The Government Gave Up

The strikes in the public sector concluded with a retreat by the government. The female teachers won almost everything that they had demanded, and the hospital nurses of Kupat Holim defeated the government.

Problematical precedents were established. First, the government and the employers conducted official negotiations with a group of workers who not only went on strike, and not only abandoned their work, but also did this in contradiction to explicit court orders.

Second, it gave up de facto on any real contribution by the employees of Kupat Holim to its rehabilitation. For what was it to which the nurses actually agreed? They agreed to give the government a linked loan, without interest, for three years, for on average about 1 percent of their overall wages. In the final analysis, the nurses are losing, and the government is earning only negative interest on this minuscule loan. Ten shekels per nurse, approximately. "The collection expenses, the recording, and the administration of this government loan exceed any budgetary savings," they say in the Ministry of Finance. And they know. Third, if the nurses agreement will be applied to all the employees of Kupat Holim, the workers can breathe easily. Economists in the Ministry of Finance calculated and found that the workers' real contribution to the recovery plan of Kupat Holim, according to the model that the nurses won, comes to NIS [new Israeli shekels] 4 to 5 million, as against the approximately NIS500 million cost of the entire recovery. Thus, the minister of finance was furious with the nurses, and with the Ministry of Health, and the director-general of his ministry was twice as furious.

They were furious, they let off steam, and, in the end, they both retreated.

In the four years since 1988, gross real wages in the business sector of the Israeli economy declined by about 10 percent, and at exactly the same time, wages in the public sector—government employees, municipal employees, employees of the Histadrut and its institutions—rose by approximately 9 percent.

It may be said with more than a little justice that there was a redistribution of the wage pie in the economy: what the industrial employees lost, the employees in the public services gained. The government's and the Histadrut's handling of the two large strikes this year, of the female teachers and of the nurses, does not promise a change for the better in this trend. Does it promise a change for the worse?

How will the government, which failed versus the teachers, cope with the necessary efficiency lay-offs of

thousands of workers from the various defense industries? And how will the Histadrut, which failed versus the nurses, cope with dismissals from its swollen bureaucracies? Who will perform these operations and who will bear the pain?

Back to the Green Line

The impact of the closure on the Israeli economy is to a great extent similar to the impact of the intifada at its zenith. But then the territories detached themselves from Israel of their own volition, and today the cutting-off—the partial one—is of our volition.

The government made many contradictory decisions regarding work permits for Palestinian laborers from the territories. The policy changed daily, until in the end permits have already been given to 50,000 workers, most of them from Judea and Samaria, and a minority from Gaza. Now the problem, from the Israeli economic viewpoint, is only local: construction in Jerusalem and in the south, a few thousand agricultural laborers in the moshavim, a few workers in services and in garages. In all, the damage to the Israeli economy from the closure and the partial cutting-off from the territories is estimated at about one percent of the national product, about \$600 million; even this estimate is controversial.

Of course, the injury to the Arab population in the territories of Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza is several times worse, between one-third and one-half of their local product. An economist at a government institution who specializes in the relations between Israel and the territories says: We are moving to a new stage in economic relations between Israel and the territories. From integration without boundaries, to a situation of close ties between two separate economic entities. There is no intention to return to the period in which goods, services, and persons could move over the Green Line as if there were no Green Line. As if it did not exist on the map. From now on, every mutual movement will require an appropriate permit. I term this, says the government economist, "Entry Permit to Israel," and "Entry Permit to the Autonomy"; the others can call it something else.

The two economies will have to be reorganized. A period of uncertainty is liable to continue for a considerable time. To that must be added the expenses that the Government of Israel will have in the territories themselves, especially in Gaza. Public works, which are actually disguised unemployment payments, in the amount of up to \$20 million per week.

The impact of the closure is reflected not only in economic indices. There is something else that is not captured by the statistics: a national mood and the image of Israel in the eyes of the world.

During the intifadah, even when the number of violent incidents in the territories had already dropped to one-fourth, there was still a lot of talk among us about a "psychological economic recession." Entrepreneurs

refrained from initiatives, investors from investing, consumers from consuming. This recession ended when the peace talks began in Madrid, and afterwards turned into a real boom when the peace process entered the channel of continuous talks. Suddenly, the country filled up with foreign investors, who are searching feverishly for credible representatives. Suddenly, the foreign banks began to take an interest in our situation. The international economic press began to praise us.

With the beginning of the closure and the impasse in the peace talks, the economic gloom of those bad days returned (not completely, of course). Fact: in the first third of the year, there was a decline of 70 percent in requests for new investments. The commercial branches, the most sensitive indicator of consumer moods, report a drop in sales (and thus, finally, correct the misleading reports of unprecedented business during Pesah).

And they are not hurrying to complete and operate the shopping malls in the city of sands, Rishon Letziyon; it is not a coincidence.

Is Housing Guilty?

Five months ago, Bank of Israel Governor Professor Ya'akov Frankel was interviewed by YEDI'OT AHA-RONOT and he declared that he—in contrast to several members of the government—was unable to promise that in 1993 the inflation rate would fall below 10 percent. Frankel saw on the horizon a constellation of problems, and the chance of a light inflationary rain.

His fears, up to now, have proved themselves. During the first four months of this year we are talking about an average monthly increase of 1.3 percent, nearly 17 percent on an annual basis. Each month, a different exceptional explanation is found for the exceptional inflation, from the prices of apartments to the prices of sandals. But it is the nature of the Consumer Price Index—it absorbs and processes a tremendous number of "exceptional" price changes into one average, and it is the average that is important.

Is housing guilty? To the best of my knowledge, no one else has a convincing economic answer to the question how it happened at all that apartment prices went up so rapidly in a market in which there is a tremendous surplus of empty apartments. The phenomenon contradicts basic economic intuition. The assertion that "the prices of apartments are denominated in dollars, so that apartment prices go up with the devaluations" sounds a bit absurd. For an Israeli apartment is not an imported good, and there are no customs duties on it. And our wages also are not paid in dollars and do not go up with every devaluation.

Our greatest fear, they say in the Bank of Israel Research Department, is the resumption of expectations of high inflation. At the beginning of the year, everyone believed that the index would rise half a percent per month, and they acted accordingly. They refrained from initiating excessive price increases, for fear of losing customers and

profits. Now, slowly but surely, the atmosphere is changing. They are becoming accustomed again to an inflation of about 1.3 percent per month, or even 1.5 percent per month. It is bad, very bad.

Therefore, the question is not solely apartment prices. The question is prices in general. Whoever expects to end the year with an increase of 9.5 percent in the index, like last year, must have an increase in prices of no more than 0.4 percent per month in each of the next eight months. Is that possible? It is very problematical, especially if one takes into account the recent wage increases and the large increase in the quantity of credit and money.

In a Dramatic Decline

Two or three days ago the Budget Director in the Ministry of Finance, David Brodet, said that the unemployment graph in Israel is beginning to turn downwards, that is, that the rate of unemployment may drop towards the end of the year.

This is definitely good news. The problem is that it is the result of a less beneficial reality: a drastic and continuing decline in the rate of immigration to Israel.

When we pat ourselves on the back for the rapid growth of the economy, from mid-1990 to mid-1992, we forget what happened here and did not happen anywhere else in the world. Here we had a mass immigration, equal to 10 percent of the Jewish population. Four hundred thousand Jews arrived from the former Soviet Union. The immigration, as expected, pulled the entire economy along. In contrast to incorrect stories that spread among the public, the immigrants did not take one job from the veterans. To the contrary—additional jobs were created, and the absorption of immigration acted to spur and to speed up all economic activity.

But already a year ago it became clear that the difficulties of absorption in Israel were having a direct impact on the sharp downturn in the rate of immigration. The estimate that another million immigrants could come from the former Soviet Union was shattered. Immigration stabilized at about 5,000 persons per month. And what happened? The construction branch shrank by one-half, trade began to stutter, and the rapid growth of the Israeli economy was halted as if by a magician's wand.

Throughout the second half of 1992 we were, in fact, in the throes of a recession. And the product did not increase. There was apparently a recovery in the first quarter of 1993, a kind of a lagged reaction to the expansionary—and correct—investment policy of the new government. Is this sustainable growth?

The recent political developments in the former Soviet Union are calming the Jews who live there. Yeltsin is winning, Russia is taking giant strides towards becoming a conventional state along Western lines. The Jews are already not eager to get out. "Even an immigration of 50,000 persons annually is already not guaranteed in

1994," say quietly the people at the Jewish agency, who only one year ago would not be satisfied with less than 500,000.

As long as the immigrants who have already arrived become integrated into the economy and raise their standard of living and their wage level, they are still stimulating economic activity. But this stimulative power is becoming weaker and weaker. Most of them have already found work, work without status and without permanent income. They are accepting their inability to contribute to society, and the personal and professional decline. We are all losing from this.

An Economy in Retreat

Israel is exposed to foreign trade more than many other countries of its kind. We export about 30 percent of our national product, and import about 45 percent of it. We are greatly affected by global recession and boom; Israeli exports had two-and-a-half problematical years, like the economy of the United States and Western Europe, and one good quarter. The sudden increase in exports of goods in the first three months of the present year reflects, therefore, the brief resurgence of the Western economies, between autumn and winter.

But since the beginning of spring, there is again talk of a retreat. Three months ago, economists of the Common Market published a revised forecast for the current year: zero growth in general, and specifically a decline in product in Germany and in France. Clinton's economists are in a panic seeking a remedy that will spur the American economy, and have not yet found one. All of his big plans are stuck in the Congress, or with his wife Hillary, and he tours the United States as if he were a visiting lecturer, not a President.

Despite the positive results of the referendum in Denmark, the "European doubt," the doubt regarding the ability of Europe to unite politically and to recover economically, continues to spread like a disease, to whistle like an evil wind in the alleys of Brussels, the capital of the Market. The 18 million unemployed in Europe do not have a hope of finding productive work until the end of the decade and afterwards. Germany is becoming weaker and is collapsing under the weight of the budgetary deficits and the subsidies to the East. In Britain, even news of a 0.2-percent increase in product is seen as a national economic holiday.

Under such circumstances, Israel is unable to be an exception of business prosperity and of growing exports. Not without extraordinary conditions of its own, such as a resumption of immigration or a Middle East peace agreement. Without all of these, the decline in world demands will hit us again, when the supply contracts that are now in the pipeline are completed.

We are not Japan. Not yet, what can you do.

Hawk Missile Battery Doctrine in North, South

*93AA0059A Tel Aviv BITA'ON HEYL HA'AVIR
in Hebrew Apr 93 pp 60-65*

[Article by Inat Aharonov: "North and South"]

[Text] The status of planes in the sky sets the agenda for the soldiers of the Hawk missile batteries. When an enemy plane comes a little too close to the borders of the State of Israel, the siren goes off in the battery and all the soldiers and officers scramble to their positions.

We visited two operational Hawk batteries: a southern battery and a northern battery. Each border dictates its own agenda, and life in the southern Hawk battery is totally different from that in the northern one.

In the southern battery, the quiet border—about 20-30 km from the post—creates a quiet, comfortable atmosphere, almost idyllic. The soldiers in the battery are almost exclusively occupied with everything having to do with antiaircraft matters and are set to intercept any hostile target that approaches the border.

"At a distance of about 20-30 km from the Israeli-Jordanian border, there is an international flight path," says the battalion commander, Lt. Col. Sami. "We see every plane that transits this path when it moves north or south. Furthermore, there is always the danger that one of the planes will turn westward and, within a few moments, penetrate our territory. This fact requires us to be very tense. Any approach by planes toward our border scrambles the entire battery."

On the other hand, the northern border—the one that is dynamic and "hot"—inspires an atmosphere of perpetual tension and compels the deployment of ground defense of the post and the adjacent kibbutz—in addition, of course, to the principal objective of the battery: aerial defense of the Golan Heights area.

"If there is fear of a breach of the installation fence in our area or if there is a sure penetration of Israeli territory," explains Lt. Shai, the battery's operations officer, "we go into a state that is called 'post attack.' All the soldiers man perimeter defense positions, lie on the ground around the post with their weapons, and defend it. In addition, an alert squad is scrambled for the benefit of the adjacent kibbutz, and defends the kibbutz until the warning is over."

To Dance With the Ibexes

When we sat down on the weapons carrier, the driver Erez smiled somewhat enigmatically and said: "You do not know what is awaiting you." When we got onto the dirt road leading to the southern battery, we understood what he meant. About 14 kms separate the asphalt highway and our battery. The soldiers have to make their way on a dirt path strewn with stones, ruts, and ups and downs. In 40 minutes, if nothing goes wrong on the road, the journey is over and you reach the battery.

"This site has a very serious defect," says the battalion commander Lt. Col. Sami, "and that is the road to it. It really is a bottleneck that affects supplies to the site. Civilians have a hard time sending vehicles here to supply lubricants and food. Entertainment shows do not come here because artists are not willing to put up with the road. The soldiers prefer not to go out after hours because of the difficult road, and leaving for home is not simple because the soldiers have to travel 40 minutes in a bumpy, jarring trunk."

Lt. Col. Sami calls this battery a "site" because it was, in fact, set up within a nature preserve. On the path on the way to the battery you can even see the signs put up by the Society for the Protection of Nature. Roaming freely about the battery in daylight hours are ibexes and (tristrams), while at night, foxes can be seen nearby.

The operational territory of the battery is located on a flat hill and from its high position it commands desert expanses and the Dead Sea area. Every launch pad has an emplacement of three pointed missiles facing outward toward the open space and painted in bright camouflage colors.

In the background you hear the constant hum of the generators that operate the numerous electronic instruments that make up the Hawk system. Each of these instruments has a foreign acronym. In the "Hawk language" that all of the locals speak, P.A.R is a detection radar, H.P.I. is a locking radar, the B.C.C. is the control center, and the J-BOX is the place where the "trigger" of the missiles is located. The population of the Hawk battery, both in the north and in the south, is made up of antiaircraft personnel, control assistants, operators, technicians, and administrative types.

The control assistants stay in the control cabin and man it continuously, in shifts that cover all 24 hours of the day. The cabin is small, narrow, and low and, in fact, constitutes the nerve center of the battery. That is where the information from the detection radars goes and where it appears on the screens, thus providing the location of every plane in the air space that the battery is in charge of. In this cabin they track the target, lock onto it, and, finally, launch the missiles.

"The moment a plane crosses the black line indicated for me on the screen, I scramble the battery," control assistant Yaniv says. "From our point of view, this is the safety line. After scrambling, an officer goes to the control cabin and takes charge until the threat has passed."

The operators are the ones responsible for the launch-pads, the missiles, and the J-BOX, which is the final trigger before launch. Operating a switch in this box sends a heater voltage to the missiles and prepares them for launching. Always sitting in a room named for that same small box—the J-BOX—are a crew member and a crew chief; and when an officer gives the instruction, they throw the switch.

Technicians come to the battery after taking a special course in the Air Force's technical school. The concentration is very specifically geared to the instrument, and after acquiring experience at the battery, they go on to take more advanced courses relevant to the specific instrument they are in charge of. In general, their job is to maintain those instruments, make sure they are in good working condition, and fix any problems with them.

The southern battery is completely cut off from civilization. A soldier who goes there, willingly or not, can leave only when it is his turn in the rotation. There is a standing joke in the battery, that has long gone stale, that even if you wanted to escape there is nothing that you could do; it is simply impossible.

There is no dearth of sirens at this battery. Once every day or two you can hear the wail of the siren warning of a possible penetration of Israeli territory by an enemy plane, and the battery scrambles. But there is no need to exaggerate: With all the scramblings and duty calls there is still a lot of free time in which to wage, in tandem, a quiet war—one against routine and boredom. The clubhouse, therefore, is very active. "We read a whole lot of books," Eli, the operator crew chief, tells me. "Every book that comes here passes from hand to hand. Apart from that we watch videotapes, and are addicted to the Simpsons."

The reddening color of the sky was the only indication that evening was coming on. We joined the group of operators going down to the dining room. In the administrative section, removed from the operational area, you no longer hear the monotonous hum of the generators, and the only echoing noise was the dribbling of a basketball on the sports field in the center of the battery. After dinner some of the soldiers go out and feed the ibexes.

Low Temperature, High Alert

We also went to the northern battery on a weapons carrier, despite the fact that it can also be easily reached in a Subaru or Susita. The bright brown color that enveloped the southern battery was replaced here by dark browns and greens. Instead of the clean, red sandy soil, we were on dark, swampy ground, and the barren plains gave way to hills of pine trees.

The first thing to attract our attention was the weaponry. Every soldier in the battery had his personal weapon on him. The officers, the guards, the soldiers of the readiness squad, and those of the assistance squad walked around with their weapons, with the cartridges in the "insert" position. In the operational area, the heavy weapons were also in a different configuration. Undoubtedly, a totally different reality.

"What is particular about this battery," says battalion commander Lt. Col. Ilan, "is the fact that this is the only

battery with surface-to-air missiles that simultaneously faces both a ground threat and an air threat, from two different countries."

In the northern battery you can argue whether they scramble more because of the ground threat or the air threat, but the main reason the battery is there is to defend the country's skies. The minute there is fear of penetration of the country's borders by enemy planes, the siren goes off and the battery goes into "immediate" status, which means that within a few minutes the missile is ready for launch.

When the siren sounds, the control assistants and officers run to the control center. Whoever gets there first enters the room. And that is the person who will be the operator. If and when, of course. All the action takes place in this room, from which they maintain contact with the regional control unit, from which they see the plane, track it, and lock onto it. If the threat materializes, they will also launch the missiles from there. The crew of operators, which is already on alert within the J-BOX, splits up. The crew member runs to the aerial observation position, from which he watches the skies. The crew chief remains in the room and, upon instructions from an officer, "will release the final trigger before firing" and enable the missile launch.

Simultaneously, every one of the technicians in the readiness crew runs to the instrument of his specialty. Should there be a problem with it, he will be there and fix it as soon as possible.

In addition to the scrambling that takes place whenever there is fear of ground penetration, there is also an artillery procedure at this battery. From the moment there is a threat of artillery firing, the entire battery goes into battle equipment status; i.e., plastic helmets and bulletproof vests. The moment such firing begins, they all go into the security rooms.

"During the last Katyusha attack," says Lt. Grashi, the commander of the battery, "the battery was 24 hours in the security rooms. The only moving around that the soldiers did was from the guard position to the security room and vice-versa."

At dinner, the daily briefing takes place. They all eat together, and before so much as a leaf of cabbage goes into their mouths, they have to get through the daily quiz. Lt. Shai, the operations officer, stands before the group, does an attendance check, and fires off the procedures in salvos. The minute his flood of words stops, he pulls out a question and directs it to one of the soldiers, who has to answer it immediately without so much as moving an eyebrow. It turns out that every day before dinner, at every border post, this exact same procedure is carried out. The idea behind the evening briefing is that when those soldiers are scrambled, even if they are deeply asleep, they have to know exactly what to do.

Because of the fact that the northern battery is also deployed for the ground defense of itself and the adjacent kibbutz, it has many assignments, from a readiness squad for the defense of the kibbutz to readiness against an enemy terrorist strike, and thus there is almost no free time.

Alex, one of the soldiers, went into the J-BOX after working on the missiles and cleaning them with a special missile soap. He sat down on the readiness bed in the room, wrapped in a blanket and with his high-topped army shoes smeared with mud. Despite the fact that Alex came from Moscow five years ago, he suffers from the cold on the northern border: "It is not the same cold," he says, "the cold in Israel is accompanied by rain. And besides, how do you get used to the cold anyway?"

The veterans of the battery will not forget last winter, when the battery was covered with half a meter of snow. Those older still will not forget the period of the war when all the standards changed. "Those who were here during the Gulf war can appreciate the conditions we have now," says Shahar, who is in charge of the operators. "During the war we stayed in 'immediate' status all day long. The missiles were hot, and all that remained was to fire on 'FIRE.' We had almost no sleep and did not get out of uniform for a minute. We walked around like zombies, dead tired, and could not take a shower without an officer's say so."

JORDAN

**Minutes of Islamic Action Front Party Conference
93AA0048B Amman AL-RIBAT in Arabic 14 Apr 93
p 2**

[Article by Yasir Abu-Hilalah: "Front Party Completes Organizational Structure; Begins Preparation for Coming Elections"]

[Text] In a meeting that began at 1000 and ended at 1800 (as per agenda), the Islamic Action Front Party began to take shape with increasing clarity. On the organizational level, all that remains is to hold the general convention during which 1,000 members will participate. The secretary general expects that it will convene during the second half of this year. Most of today's meeting was spent on organizational, administrative, and financial issues. The surprise of the meeting was Dr. Ishaq's announcement of a donation for party branches of 18,000 Jordanian dinars by a group of merchants. Nevertheless, financial complaints are mutual among the rest of the branches (even the third Amman branch!).

The subject of the coming parliamentary elections occupied the last session of the conference. This session was a discussion and general dialogue and laid the general foundation and support for mechanisms that will be employed.

At the conclusion of the conference, the secretary general commented on the settlement progress, saying that the storm of peace would be more violent than the storm of war. He called for balance between basic invariables and realistic flexibility. He said that the party will try to offer a contemporary Islamic example for the region as a whole, through maintaining invariables, coexisting with reality, and being committed to the constitution's provisions.

The following is a report on this conference.

Amid an atmosphere of positive interaction and open dialogue, as well as strict, principled commitment, and with an attendance of 124 out of 136 members, the Islamic Action Front Party held the first conference of administrative boards on Friday, 9 April 1993.

The conference began with a reading of the Koran. Then, Secretary General Dr. Ishaq Farhan gave the opening speech. He stated that the conference had been convened "to deliberate matters concerning our party's progress and to pursue implementing the plan of operation, evaluating what has been done and reviewing the completion of establishment actions. Our meeting is in the first quarter of the establishment year. Our party has completed one of the most important links of the establishment chain, with the opening of 17 branches in various areas of the kingdom and electing their administrative cadres."

In his speech, the secretary general reviewed the progress of the party's Executive Office during the past three months, since it has completed the distribution of tasks among its members. It supervised the election of the branch administrative boards, as well as the by-elections for the party's Advisory Council for the third Amman and al-Salt branches.

The Executive Office has also leased and outfitted the general headquarters in Amman and prepared a draft of the Front's estimated budget. It has also instructed the branches to prepare their budgets. The office prepared the financial documents and the rest of the necessary records. Moreover, it has begun work on drafts of organizational bylaws. These include, in particular, regulations for waqf and investment, the financial system, employee structure, etc.

The office has appointed two employees in the general headquarters to organize the work and to publish four editions of an internal, not-for-circulation publication.

The party's political office has been formed. It was decided to form a 31 [member] central committee, concerned with the party's financial and administrative, political, media, and cultural affairs, as well as relations with other parties.

Agreement was reached on certain expected party projects to publish appropriate literature, in accordance

with an integrated plan. The party's Center for Information and Studies will cooperate in this plan with various central committees and with specialized scholars in the Jordanian community.

The Executive Office has pursued collecting funds to benefit the waqf and investment fund. Executive Office members have themselves begun to donate to the general headquarters, as well as to party branches, so that the policy of self-sufficiency can be applied.

The party's Executive Office has interacted in various branch activities and has participated in their deliberations and lectures. It also has taken part, along with other parties' secretaries general, in other forums.

The Islamic Action Front Party's secretary general held two press conferences and took part in radio and television broadcasts to explain the party's viewpoint toward the Zionist attack on the Islamic awakening. The secretary general expects to hold the party's general conference, in which 1,000 members will participate, in the second half of this year. This will be the last link in organizing the party.

Dr. Ishaq discussed the issue of the coming parliamentary elections. "We want to enter them, since the party will have completed its first year since being established."

The secretary general said: "Sincerity of intentions and supremacy of public interests will be our guide, in order to overcome any obstacles."

He requested that no one announce his candidacy or begin an election campaign until agreement is reached on candidacy standards, which will include competency, education, and potential for success, along with the opinion of the general board, study by the Advisory Council, and a decision by the Executive Office.

After Dr. Ishaq ended his speech, the administrative boards submitted specialized reports concerning accomplishments they have made, aspirations for which they are working, and obstacles they face. After that, the secretary general commented on these reports.

The deputy secretary general, and assistant for administrative and financial affairs, reviewed fiscal and administrative matters and the formation of central committees with the members of the administrative boards.

Coming Elections

The last section of the conference was a general discussion and dialogue about the coming parliamentary elections. Deputy Secretary General Dr. 'Abdallah al-'Akayilah began the discussion, saying: "We will enter the elections with the same slogan as in the previous elections, 'Islam is the Solution,' but in a broader context. We will interpret the slogan as a form of shadow cabinet or a detailed program for specialized committees. We shall try to have our experience be a model for the Arab and Islamic countries."

NEAR EAST

Representative Hamzah Mansur, assistant secretary general for administrative affairs, and permanent general secretary, said that with regard to participation and candidacy, the final decision will be centralized and advise will come from the broadest base. The secretary general said that this discussion was a kind of thinking-out-loud and was not for decision-making purposes. Therefore, no working paper was prepared.

Members of the administrative boards participated in the discussions. They stressed their interest in a balance between both opportunity to win and competency, with no closing-off of election districts, and the need to fulfill qualifications and specifications and to prepare a document setting them forth. They also stressed the need to respect the decision of the rank and file, stating that the decision should be based on an objective study, and that attention should be paid to regional, Arab, and international circumstances.

During the discussion, the secretary general repeated the party's opposition to any change in the elections law that are aimed at fragmenting election districts and confusing the candidates and voters. The conferees issued a communique, explaining the party's views regarding new developments in the Arab, Islamic, and international arenas.

Communiqué

The conferees decided to issue a statement expressing the party's basic and established position vis-a-vis continuing aggression against the Palestinian people, ignoring the Palestinian deportees issue, and continuing the process of a political settlement of the Palestinian issue, despite Zionist intransigence supported by the American administration, which has gone beyond the limit to achieve world Zionist interests. The party's position also condemns the blockade against the Iraqi and Libyan people, the iniquitous attack against the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the attacks against the freedoms of citizens in Egypt, Tunisia, and Algeria, and the plotting against Sudanese well-being.

Jottings

- The 'Ajlun Branch referred in its report to the fact that two mayors from 'Ajlun townships are Front members.
- The first verse of the Koran was read for the soul of the deceased Mithqal al-Kasasibah, the first person to sign a membership application in the al-Karak Branch. The al-Karak Branch was the first to be opened.
- The al-Karak report referred to the donation of members' vehicles to assist people during snow days.
- Dr. Mansur al-Kaswani, member of the Advisory Council in Amman, left for treatment on the day of the conference. He is expected to recover.

- The al-Zarqa' Branch referred to the importance of an anthem for the party. The secretary general commented that Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Majali had delivered a poem at the opening of the party branch in al-Karak.
- The Friday speaker at the Hotel Tayiki [word as published] (the conference's venue) was Dr. Muhammad 'Uwaydah, member of the party's Executive Office. His speech concerned lessons in the struggle of a person whose anniversary fell on the day the conference was convened.
- The Islamic Action Front Party in Jarash nominated six of its members for the Sakib Club elections; all of them won.

MOROCCO

Closer Ties To Madagascar Initiated

93AF0607B Algiers LIBERTE in French 9 May 93 p 3

[Text] Morocco and Madagascar have decided to establish cooperative relations in several areas, it was announced in Rabat Thursday evening in a joint statement issued at the end of a four-day visit to Morocco by Madagascar's deputy prime minister, Francisque Ravony.

"As two brotherly nations committed to the principles of respect for territorial integrity and national sovereignty, the two parties have agreed to establish cooperative relations in various fields," the statement noted.

In his talks with Moroccan officials, which were held in "an atmosphere of brotherhood and understanding," Mr. Ravony highlighted the "great interest" that his country's new authorities attach to "the promotion and development of friendly and cooperative relations with the kingdom of Morocco."

Morocco, for its part, emphasized the "principles of brotherhood, solidarity, and mutual aid that guide the kingdom's policy toward the other brotherly nations of Africa."

This was the first time since the change of government in Madagascar that the deputy prime minister has headed a delegation from his country on an overseas visit. He was seen by King Hassan II on Wednesday when he presented the king with a message from Madagascar's president, Professor Albert Zafy, who was elected in February.

Mr. Ravony—who was accompanied by Madagascar's foreign affairs minister, Cessaire Rabenoro, among others—also held several meetings with Prime Minister Karim Lamrani and other members of the Moroccan Government.

Together they discussed "the means to be implemented" in order to promote bilateral cooperation, which had been at a standstill for years because of the position taken on the Western Sahara by Madagascar's former government under the presidency of Didier Ratsiraka.

Morocco had broken off nearly all ties to Madagascar in 1976 after the government in Antananarivo recognized the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), which was created that year by the Polisario Front and was recognized by several other countries.

Steps To Ensure Honest Elections Implemented
93AF0600B Rabat L'OPINION in French 9 May 93 p 1

[Editorial by Mohamed Idrissi Kaitouni: "To Guarantee Honest Elections"]

[Text] After suspending on 4 February 1993 their participation in the national commission in charge of overseeing the polling operations, whose efforts did not yield the expected results, the democratic parties decided to return to the national commission.

This decision was the result of the progress achieved in implementing the guarantees required to ensure honest and credible elections.

The computerization of the electoral rolls, which revealed over 60,000 dual registrations, and their straightening out in the context of the purging operation that was started, the issuing of new voting cards with characteristics that offer more guarantees in order to prevent fraud or abuse, the adoption of a new distribution of constituencies, all these are progress that consolidate the efforts undertaken to organize honest and transparent elections.

Obviously, much remains to be done, as the democratic parties pointed out, in particular:

- to create local commissions with broad powers to check and monitor the various polling operations in each legislative constituency;
- to set up watchdog committees whose task it will be to audit the financing of the election campaign and fight the abusive use of funds to buy votes, and to ensure compliance with legal provisions in this respect;
- to set up polling stations—these play an important part and must offer all possible guarantees of impartiality;
- to establish a climate of political detente so as to restore the citizens' confidence and arouse their enthusiasm, which will encourage them to go massively to the polls and fulfill their civic duty.

These are a few priority objectives that the democratic parties should achieve through their efforts within the national commission in charge of overseeing the polling operations.

What matters for the democratic parties is that the forthcoming legislative elections should take place with total transparency, and that the institutions resulting from these elections should be credible and truly representative, thus reflecting the true political makeup of democratic Morocco.

Crop Exchange Program Difficulties Noted

*93AF0596B Rabat AL-'ALAM in Arabic
7 May 93 pp 1, 4*

[Article: "Drought, Unemployment, and Loans Within Scope of Symposium To Be Held Tomorrow, Saturday, 8 May 1993, in Fez by the General Federation of Farmers"]

[Text] The deteriorating agricultural conditions; the drought that has afflicted Morocco at the beginning and in the middle of the season; the fatal unemployment that has devolved villages, rural areas, and hamlets of their inhabitants, that has crowded cities with the desperate, that has exploded social tragedies in them, and that has motivated hundreds of citizens to embark on ventures of death, drowning, and eternal disappearance in the depths of the Mediterranean and the strait [of Gibraltar]; the loans that have almost turned into a hanging rope around the neck of small- and medium-sized farmers; and the agricultural alternative to the cultivation of Indian hemp, or what is known as "good humor" in the northern part of Morocco, are among the issues listed and proposed for the agenda of the symposium to be held by the Executive Council of the General Federation of Farmers in Fez.

While waiting for the studies, which will be presented by some brother experts who have a direct connection with agriculture and farmers, we will today publish a brief paper on the most serious issue that continues to "sway" between Morocco, the EEC, the United States, and Japan.

The subject matter of the paper is the cultivation of Indian hemp, "good humor," and what is said and rumored about it in various international circles, especially those circles that "are haggling" with Morocco on some major issues prematurely.

What is important is that the hemp cultivation issue has turned into a card used by Europe especially for pressure and distortion and as a means to soil the reputation of the citizens of northern Morocco and to accuse all northern citizens, including government officials and governors, of trafficking in and smuggling marijuana. This crop has spread and "marched" to eastern, western, and southern districts and provinces and no official party has been able to deal with the issue clearly and lucidly.

We have tried to explore the opinions of some citizens who live in the areas referred to in the "weed" cultivation "map." Frankly, none of them have permitted us to reveal their names or their places of residence because of fear for their future and because they aren't convinced that alternative farm crops can guarantee a serious yield revenue to the farmer, especially since the inhabitants of some provinces have had unsuccessful experiences with the so-called alternative project for development of the western rural provinces, (?DERO), whose birth dates back to nearly a third of a century ago.

The issue is very serious socially and economically, and even at the security level. It is an issue that cannot be tackled with emotion, with favoritism, or with protocol just to please the Europeans and the Americans who are actually the source of devastating catastrophes, such as cocaine, heroine, and other chemical and synthetic drugs.

Some farmers in (Gemara) District of Chachaouen, in Beni Hassan District of Tetouan, in Beni Arouss District of Larache, in Beni Srif District of Ksar Kebir, and in Ketama District of Houcema have assured us frankly that they actually support the directives to fight [drugs] and to grow alternative crops but that they aren't at all convinced of an agricultural alternative similar to the DERO.

Whether the "good-humor" crop is replaced by olives, almonds, plums, peaches, apples, pistachio nuts, or grape vineyards, the production from these crops isn't guaranteed to yield a profit, not even a profit of 10 percent.

Labor Unions Issue Statement on Arrested Members

93AF0596C Rabat AL-'ALAM in Arabic 7 May 93 p 1

[Article: "Joint Statement by Executive Bureaus of General Federation of Moroccan Workers and Democratic Labor Confederation on First Anniversary of Arrest of Brother Driss Gheneimi; Continued Arbitrary Detention of Brothers Gheneimi, Lamaoui, and Other Opinion Prisoners Denounced"]

[Text] Tomorrow, Saturday, 8 May, will coincide with the first annual anniversary of the arrest of brother struggler Driss Gheneimi, a member of the General Federation of Moroccan Workers' Executive Bureau. This arbitrary and unjust arrest was perpetrated by a plot for which the basest means and most heinous accusations were made by hired elements who carried out their masters' orders. As a result, our brother was subjected to an unjust trial, which was characterized by major human rights violations, considering that the court refused to summon either accusers or witnesses and was content with the reports drafted with a premeditated spirit aimed at throwing our brother Driss Gheneimi in the dark bowels of jail for five years, in addition to denying him his national [civil] rights for 10 years.

Brother Driss Gheneimi's offense has always been his influential presence amidst farm workers in the western region where feudalism has ruled supreme and where it has tried to kill every form of struggle waged by farm workers in defense of their interests and their dignity.

While reminding the Moroccan public of the presence of this struggler behind bars, while reminding of his family that has been denied its supporter, and while reminding of the vacuum created by struggler Driss Gheneimi's absence in his region and throughout the country, the two executive bureaus urge all citizens to express their sympathy for and solidarity with the Democratic Labor

Federation and the General Federation of Moroccan Workers. They also appeal to all legal and unionist organizations at home and abroad to intensify their efforts for the release of brothers Driss Gheneimi and Mohamed Nobeir Lamaoui. They also take this occasion to thank all international associations that have expressed their solidarity by organizing rallies in Paris, (Lille and ?Amiens) in France and in other cities in Belgium and the Netherlands.

The Democratic Labor Confederation and the General Federation of Moroccan Workers renew their condemnation and denunciation of the continued arbitrary imprisonment of brothers Driss Gheneimi, Mohamed Nobeir Lamaoui, and other opinion detainees. They call for the release of all these people so as to contribute to creating the climate that must prevail in a state of laws.

The two federations address greetings to and express pride in brothers Gheneimi and Lamaoui and pledge to continue marching on the struggle path until final victory is achieved for workers by having their dignity preserved and their rights acknowledged.

The Two Executive Bureaus.

Human Rights Committee Reports on Cases

*93AF0596E Rabat AL-'ALAM in Arabic
7 May 93 pp 1,4*

[Article: "Report by Central Office of Moroccan League for Defense of Human Rights; Numerous Cases of Violation of Citizens' Human Rights and of Undermining Their Basic Liberties"]

[Text] The Central Office of the Moroccan League for the Defense of Human Rights continues to receive letters, memoranda, and pleas on numerous cases of human rights violations and undermined basic liberties, on arbitrary and unjust actions perpetrated by some public officials, and on the miserable prison conditions and the harassment to which political detainees are subjected.

Despite the noticeable lack of interest on the officials' part in issues raised by the league in statements which the league issues independently or in conjunction with the coordination committee, the Central Office cannot but continue to denounce and condemn all kinds of violations and insist on demanding respect for the citizens' individual and collective human rights, on preserving human dignity, and on entrenching the state of right and law.

Part of what the league has received recently includes:

1. A letter from Islamic detainees (71) on a temporary suspension of their hunger strike and their determination to resume it in case their demands regarding the right to visitation, medical care, and correspondence are not met (13 signatures).

2. A letter from Justice and Benevolence students who are detained at the Kenitra central prison regarding the prison's catastrophic conditions, which have deteriorated further recently. This has motivated detainees to stage successive hunger strikes to defend their gains. The latest strike was staged on 15 April 1993 because of lack of interest in demands concerning direct visitation, education, and medical care. On 22 April 1993, detainees went on an openended hunger strike (12 signatures).

3. A letter from the families of Islamic detainees denouncing the harassment of their sons and their neglected demands, warning of ill consequences to their sons' health condition, and drawing the public opinion's attention to the openended hunger strike staged by the said detainees (12 detainees).

4. A number of letters from some college students and some citizens expressing their resentment of the scandalous contradiction between rhetoric and practice where human rights are concerned. This contradiction is evident in the persistent phenomenon of political detention and in muzzling opinion. The letters denounce the oppression of Islamic detainees at the Kenitra central prison and the denial of their simplest rights, such as enrollment in colleges, visitation, and medical care, and they call for investigating the situation of the said detainees.

5. An appeal signed by branch representatives of a number of political, unionist, legal, youth, and cultural organizations in Safi. It is also signed by 333 citizens from various social and professional factions in Safi denouncing the arrest of Saied Ahmed Belaishi, a member of the Moroccan Human Rights Association, expressing solidarity with Belaishi in his ordeal, viewing his case as one of Morocco's human rights violations cases, and demanding the immediate release of Belaishi and of opinion prisoners.

- The Central Office of the Moroccan League for the Defense of Human Rights has also recorded several other violations in this period, including, for example:
- Prohibiting a peaceful demonstration which national women's organizations had planned to stage in protest of corruption and the defilement of honor. This prohibition undermines provisions of the Moroccan constitution which provides in section nine for "free expression of all kinds and freedom of association." This is in addition to the seizure of the right to demonstrate, which is stipulated in sections 11 and 12 of the 15 November 1958 decree concerning public gatherings. The prohibition also contradicts Article 20 of the International Human Rights Declaration and Article 21 of the International Civil and Political Rights Charter.
- Prohibiting Fouad Abelmoumeni, a member of the Moroccan Human Rights Association, from leaving Morocco without any legal justification. This is a violation of the right to free movement stipulated in

article 13 of the International Human Rights Declaration and article 12 of the International Civil and Political Rights Charter.

- Detaining Hassan Albou, an expolitician, at the airport and preventing him from going to a foreign country for medical treatment, which is a violation of the two aforementioned articles.
- The deteriorating health condition of Driss Gheneimi, a unionist struggler, and preventing a physician accredited by the central union to which the detainee belongs from visiting Gheneimi to be reassured about his health.
- The death of a citizen while in detention at the gendarmerie station in Jodeida because he was assaulted there, according to a complaint filed by the victim's family.

Added to all the above is the continued illegal blockade under which the home of Abdesslam Yasin, an Islamic preacher, is kept; the continued arrest of numerous political and unionist strugglers because they expressed their opinions or engaged in political or unionist activity; the failure to reveal the fate of some detainees in Tazzemourt; the continued pressure and harassment to which released political detainees are subjected; the denial of the right of a number of citizens to acquire passports; and the failure to adopt any tangible steps to confront the injustices, the excessive use of authority, and the violation of citizens' dignity.

While asserting its solidarity with victims of the violations and denouncing all violations and excesses, the Central Office of the Moroccan League for the Defense of Human Rights demands anew that the oversight committee provided for in sections 661 and 662 of the criminal code visit jails and acquaint itself with conditions insofar as housing, food, and medical care are concerned.

The Central Office believes that the preparations being made to hold the country's legislative elections in a climate (that is harmonious with the resolutions of) the International Human Rights Congress dictate responding to the vital demand—long expressed by the Moroccan League for the Defense of Human Rights and by other legal organizations and democratic forces—for a general amnesty for all political detainees without exception and for permitting the return of expatriates. Tangible legislative and practical steps have to be taken to deal with the problems raised by our country's human rights file so all its negative consequences to the citizens' life, to democratic development, and to Morocco's reputation in the international circles can be eliminated.

Issued in Rabat on 29 April 1993

The Central Office

Neglect of Mine Company Criticized

93AF0593D Rabat AL-'ALAM in Arabic 7 May 93 p 5

[Article: "Who Will Stop Decline of Rural Mine Utilization Company"]

[Text] Nobody is ignorant of the importance of the SEFERIF [Company for Exploitation of Rif Area Mines] in Ouksan [name as published] and the economic and social role it has played, not just at the local or provincial level but also at the national and continental level. However, neglect and mismanagement have, regrettably, transformed the company into ruins. If Ahmad Shawqi, the late Arab poet, were alive, he wouldn't have denied the company a magnificent elegy painting the true features of the mine's or of the establishment's tragedy. Just for the sake of historical reference, the chain of deterioration and decline experienced by the company started in 1968 when the company was nationalized and taken over by the Bureau of Mining Explorations and Shares.

We noted all the tragic developments when they occurred through a number of reports pointing out the positions of the General Federation of Workers and the interventions of brother Ahmed Ghaleb, member of the Istiqlal Party's Parliamentary Team for Unity and Equality. We tried to draw the officials' attention to the company's critical position. But the more we tried, out of our duty to shoulder our historic responsibility to inform, the more the authorities concerned turned a blind eye to the deteriorating situation we painted.

Just so the reader can better understand the situation, we will give some of the background details. The iron processing plant was built in 1971 and it started production in 1973. But the plant did not live long, considering that it came to a halt in 1976, which gives rise to the following question:

Why were millions of centimes spent to build the plant? Why did it stop so quickly, keeping in mind that its construction was entrusted to Wale [word as published], a Canadian firm. This company was actually catastrophic for the failed project. Immediately after the plant was ruined and stopped operating, studies were conducted by company officials and by the Ministry of Energy and Mines, plus some foreign establishments. Those studies demonstrated the good quality of the minerals, the possibility of processing them, and their abundance. All this required big expenses. But due to the absence of the spirit of responsibility, to indifference, to the lack of patriotic awareness, and to the accumulation of mistakes—and we don't know if they were premeditated or caused by ignorance—the Bureau of Mining Explorations and Shares painted a rosy and extremely optimistic picture. What is more, the social and production data concocted by the bureau's executive board officials were false and erroneous and belonged in the column of brightening a gloomy picture.

Amidst these deteriorating conditions and widespread laxity, plunder, sabotage, and favoritism were added. Usable machinery was sold as "scrap metal." This was

an act objected to by a cadre who was concerned about the company. But he was removed and expelled. Within this context, equipment belonging to the clubs, the clinics, and the guesthouse was damaged. Destructive hands even got to the dishes and took them to the homes of the facilities' managers. These facilities were, in fact, part of the social asset of which the company was proud. This was done by company officials who have never been taken to task for their acts, at a time when we need to protect public money and property. We should keep in mind that the efforts that pushed the company toward dark horizons were coupled with horrible and premeditated negligence of the human element, embodied in the middle-level managers and in workers. AL-'ALAM and AL-RA'Y reported in detail that a total of 500 workers were dismissed in 1988 under catastrophic circumstances. The top-level managers benefited from the expulsions and dismissals and were showered with promotions and awards at the expense of innocent victims. They were promoted and rewarded for the great acts they performed and great services they rendered the company, especially the union official, who was promoted to executive manager even though he has the education of a high-school junior! Here, we must pause to ask this question: How can a company as big as SEFERIF be run by a manager with these qualities and with this educational level, keeping in mind that all his accomplishments are embodied in transforming the company into a stock market unionist center that plots against the law and against workers and their right to benefit from the company revenues. Just for a reference and just to point out some of the qualities of this unionist "leader" whose praise is on every lip, he was able, with rare genius, to use the working class and all laborers and powerless people as a platform to enhance his administrative and financial position. Moreover, this fellow became, by a miracle, a legal jurisprudent who plotted the issuance of a law that allowed a salary increase for the higher cadres, at the same time 500 workers were made homeless because of a fabricated financial crisis! It is as if this leader were saying that one man's catastrophe is another man's blessing.

Also as part of the violent tremors experienced by the company, always as a result of mismanagement and of manipulation of public economic interests, the company's general director was dismissed in 1992 and replaced by another manager. The company's executive manager and "unionist leader" was transferred in 1992 to the company's administrative offices in Rabat. However, he had not reported to his new position by the time this report was written. He continues to exercise his unionist tasks with utter reassurance and peace and he continues to collect his astronomical salary of no less than 22,000 dirhams! Add to this that he controls the company's only car and takes advantage of the right to [free] fuel and maintenance while using the car for transportation between his home and his union office! Here, we must raise the following question: What is the opinion of the officials directly in charge regarding this development? Do they actually perform their essential

oversight role? What is worse is that the chaotic and lax march by the company has occurred under the Bureau of Mining Explorations and Shares, its total silence, even blessing. All of this gives rise to a number of questions.

Just as a reference, some circles have begun to spread rumors about the plans by the management to reduce the number of workers another time and to dismiss more of them. But the workers are determined to continue to work in order to rescue the company and pry it away from the talons of the dragon of sabotage and manipulation, even though they have been harmed and even though their conditions have worsened.

Who, we wonder, will put an end to this decline? We hope that our scream will not go unheard.

TUNISIA

PCT Leader Harmel Discusses Changes

*93AF0587A Tunis REALITES in Arabic 22 Apr 93
pp 42-44*

[Communist Party leader interviewed by Lutfi Hajji: "Mohamed Harmel at the Conference Door: 'We Are Not Free of the Past; Our Renewal Was 20 Years Ago'"]

[Text] The Tunisian Communist Party [PCT] is preparing to hold its tenth conference on the 22d of this month. This conference will be like no other. It is a historic one, because it will proclaim the end of the Communist Party and the birth of a renewal movement—a movement whose members want a major leap toward developing the structure of their party and paths for its action and thinking.

In the interview we had with Mohamed Harmel at the conference door, he did not hide the high hopes he has pinned on this initiative, which he considers a historic opportunity. He feels the country needs a broad progressive party that includes communists and others.

According to Mr. Harmel's statements in the interview, the renewal movement is not a recent idea, nor is it an accidental or impetuous political action. Instead, it is the extension of twenty years' worth of renewal efforts. The time is now ripe to reap the fruit of those efforts. According to Mr. Harmel, the effort will first dynamically affect party action and it will, secondly, affect the opposition activity. It will seek to set forth actual national issues, by being intent upon assimilation and taking on a serious, national, critical, opposition role.

[Hajji] Those who have seen your new document have seen in it a huge popularization aided by all parties and expressing no specifics. They saw it as a document not suitable for the theoretical basis of a political party. What do you say in reply?

[Harmel] This version you are referring to is a preliminary one, intended to be used for broad discussion, criticism, and revision. A new version has recently been

issued, which incorporates all the suggestions that enhance clarity and precision. And even this second version is open to revision until—and during—the conference.

But I would like to draw the attention of those reading versions one and two and the final drafts to the fact that we did not want it to take on a doctrinaire coloring. That is why we called it "Features," so that it would not lapse into defining identity and specificity in the old narrow sense which we imagined. We defined the identity, without actually defining it in the open version, for a broad democratic and progressive party—not the identity of the communist party, nor one of the well-known parties of the left, an identity we are all working to build because there is more of the future in its specifics than there is of the past. It will never disavow the past, but it will be a combination and summation of our heritage and that of others, or, in other words, a structure of various old tributaries both political and philosophical, which have transcended all our negative points.

[Hajji] You spoke of adjustments in the second version. May we know some of the issues which were adjusted?

[Harmel] We made adjustments in nearly every paragraph and rooted out ambiguity in every part of the document, without departing from the philosophy of the document and the special nature of this progressive and democratic party. Revisions were made, for example, in confirming the progressive formula, socially, politically, and economically, without falling into the old narrow version. The second version, for example, preserves the belief in building a market economy and encouraging private initiative, while affirming the need for comprehensive national development, social justice, and the role of the government sector.

[Hajji] Isn't reconciliation between the instruments of a market economy and socialism almost impossible? Isn't it a collection of contradictions and a lack of acknowledgement, on your part, of the failure of the socialist experiment?

[Harmel] First of all, all development comes from contradictions, and it all is an attempt to reconcile contradictory economic and social demands. Our position stems from the many experiences of our country and of other countries—from the failure of socialism when it becomes the state and its sectors, when it ignores the market and its necessary mechanisms, and when it moves away from political democracy; and the failure of capitalism when it ignores the demands of social justice and national development. It is based on the fact that we in Tunisia are not in a socialist age, and we cannot allow socialism to really collapse without taking its circumstances and stages into consideration. We adhere to socialism as a historical horizon, just as we believe that capitalism cannot be the end of history or the final phase of human communities. Thus, in our values, principles, and social justice, we deal with reality, the age, and goals,

regardless of the economic system. We view the economic and social system very realistically; there is no development without social justice, or social justice without development and the provision of resources.

[Hajji] One of the questions people ask about your movement is how the old members can come up with something new, especially when new things are usually generated naturally, not by force.

[Harmel] First of all, there is the formal or superficial logic, which views a new thing as coming out of nothing; and there is the controversial logic of history, which is based on the idea that new things do not come from nothing, but come from something already in existence—that is, something new, only the old thing that creates the new is not old, rather, already in existence. The old thing that cannot be born anew is the old thing of the petrified past. What new thing has ever come out of nowhere in the history of political experience?

There are ways of discovering a new thing—total alienation, or to be new without renewal. The PCT has called for renewal for more than 20 years, in its ideas, positions, and practices in an old-fashioned framework until the coming of a comprehensive historical phase, which is the affirmation of a historical phase that has ended. We have become aware that the old way is no longer valid for the renewal movement we started a long time ago, particularly since we are convinced that it is no longer necessary for Tunisia to have a party for the communists alone. The country needs a broad, progressive party that includes communists and others. If we of the old school had not taken this step, with our heritage, experience, and awareness, the vacuum would have remained, with the old school dominant.

[Hajji] If you really want renewal, and are intent upon it now, why didn't this happen before, or even back when perestroika began and the socialist experiments collapsed, so that the renewal might have been a product of its time—an objective result?

[Harmel] In the old-new equation there is a mistaken equation. There are new parties, but are they really new? We have had renewal before, but it was still the old way for several reasons. In the early 1970s, for example, after five years of discussions, we issued a document we consider to have been a change in our philosophical and political course, like a conference document with the title "The Democratic and Progressive Alternative." Among the ideas put forward in this document were the thesis of the new party and efforts to explain why we and other progressives needed to come together to form this party. Circumstances at that time were not right, and we worked until they were. I now say that they have begun to appear. We are not of the old school, we are renewed; and we always act with a view toward the future until our role as individuals is finished. The role of individuals in history is always transitional. An old, renewed, evolved,

future slant; a new slant based on all the old theses and types which have been eroded by time, in Tunisia and outside Tunisia.

[Hajji] The first section of your document says that the party's renewal movement is open to every male and female citizen supporting its democratic goals and principles. In this framework, would you accept a moderate Islamic membership in the movement of your new party?

[Harmel] The renewal movement will have a clear grounding, based on the conference and its basic law, which accepts male and female citizens supporting the progressive goals of this movement.

[Hajji] Without looking at their ideological background?

[Harmel] The renewal movement is not a movement looking for backgrounds, though I believe it would not accept members with anti-progressive ideas. The document stipulates that the renewal movement rejects attacks upon sacred things in political action. Apart from those, our door will be wide open, and any enlightened, progressive democrat has a place completely in this future movement.

[Hajji] Will the renewal movement be in the confrontational or the cooperative opposition?

[Harmel] This vagueness is wrong from its very premise. We reject confrontational opposition, and have always rejected it, even when some people were promoting it, thinking it was the solution. Nor is cooperative opposition our slogan, because it is a meaningless one. The choice is not between opposition and support—that is a false choice. Given the present conditions in our country and considering the national goals we and the government share and the role of the president, and given that we are not in the government, and that we are a civilian society, our role in this context is to support and harmonize all the issues that need it. Our role is also to criticize, and then criticize some more—constructive criticism, of course, for all the issues that need criticism. More important than support or criticism is for one's positions to be serious and principled, not party, individual, or narrow interests. On that basis, there is no shame in support, even if some people consider me to be merely ornamental. There is no shame in criticizing; if I criticize, perhaps some people will consider me quarrelsome, even though I reject quarrelsomeness in politics. This is the line we are working for. It is moderate both in criticism and in support, to serve democracy and to take part in setting out realistic issues for the country by using veiled pretexts. Between the confrontational line we reject, and the one called participation, there is the line of criticism, of serious and at the same time moderate demands. There is in criticism support for national goals, and the renewal movement document reaffirms the principles of the National Charter.

[Hajji] The document says that membership in the party may not be withdrawn unless an individual violates the

party's principles, and that it cannot be withdrawn on the basis of a different opinion. Where is the line between party principles and a violation of opinion?

[Harmel] The second version was amended to the point where there was no confusion between a violation of opinion and what the first version called party principles—in order that there be no arbitrary treatment of violating opinions or obstruction of intellectual and political debate or the principle of pluralism in philosophical sources which the basic law provides for.

Withdrawing membership is a very rare process. It happens in cases when there is a clear departure from the progressive and ethical principles, not for political differences, even important ones. This is part of the renewal in political relations, where philosophical differences can coexist, with attention to unity in general.

[Hajji] One of the things inviting our criticism of the party is its lack of openness regarding finances, not matching its openness regarding politics and theory. Will the renewal movement pursue a new method for that and reveal the sources of its funding, and its ways of spending, to put an end to all the suspicions?

[Harmel] Regarding the financial and the other aspects, we do not want to decide now what will be decided by the renewal movement. We will elect a leading constituent assembly and executive committee. These structures will be jointly and completely responsible for making all basic and consistent decisions decided by the conference. Work in the transitional phase will be with the parties that want a common structure.

I myself support openness in all issues, particularly finance.

REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Afghan Arabs' Inception, Development Revealed
93LH0006B Aden AL-THAWRI in Arabic
15 Apr 93 p 12

[Article retransmitted from AL-MUSAWWAR, Edition No. 3574, 9 Apr 1993: "Peshawar, Which Exports Terrorism to World"]

[Text] When Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif returned to his country from a European tour, he stated that he will cooperate with Egypt to liquidate the pockets of terrorism in Peshawar.

We wonder: How does the picture look in Peshawar, which exports death to the Arab homeland and the Islamic nation? What is the truth regarding the 'Afghan Arabs' and how did matters develop with them that they have begun planning operations in Arab countries that are more than 1,000 miles away?

Egypt's AL-MUSAWWAR tries here to answer these questions so as to unmask the true nature of what goes on in Peshawar.

With the start of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and of the communist regime in Kabul in the early 1980's, thousands rushed from the Arab and Islamic countries to join the mujahedin ranks. Matters did not stop here. Rather, Muslims from countries such as the Philippines, India, and China also arrived. The first Arabs to join the mujahedin ranks were from Iraq and Syria, followed by others from Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, and other countries. The first group to attract these volunteers because of its strength and of the high salaries it paid its members was the faction led by Golbuddin Hekmatyar, the Hezb-e-Eslami leader. At the outset, nearly 3,500 Arab volunteers joined the Hezb-e Eslami. The number of Arab and Muslim volunteers rose to 16,000 and then to 20,000 who fought side-by-side with Hekmatyar's mujahedin. Arab volunteers also joined other Afghan mujahedin organizations, including the organization of Yunes Khales, who broke away from Hekmatyar, and the Islamic Society, led by Borhanoddin Rabbani.

Organization and Armament

The Partisans Hosting Services Bureau (designated for Arabs) was founded in 1984. At the same time, the Islamic Relief Agency Bureau was established in Peshawar. This agency is the biggest relief agency operating in Afghanistan to aid Afghan refugees. It has had large-scale activity for the past six years and its budget for the current year has amounted to \$12 million.

As for armament, weapons began to be delivered to the mujahedin in large quantities as of 1982 to support their battle against the Soviet occupation. They received a large quantity of U.S. antitank mines. With the onset of 1986, they began receiving Stinger missiles, along with large quantities of antitank and antiaircraft weapons, as well as thousands of automatic rifles and submachine guns. Generally, U.S. aid delivered to the mujahedin amounted to nearly \$400 million by the end of 1986.

Development of Jihad Formula

It can be said that three individuals, who became the axis of the Arab mujahedin activity, developed the jihad formula. They were led by Shaykh 'Abdallah 'Azzam, a Palestinian, who took charge of spiritual guidance and leadership. 'Azzam and two of his sons were assassinated three years ago, and the Afghan intelligence were accused of plotting the assassination. The second is Usamah Ibn Ladin, a [Saudi] businessmen who took care of financing. The third is Wa'il Julaydan, a Saudi oil figure who abandoned his higher studies at a U.S. university to take charge of administrative and organizational affairs. From three different positions, the three began to dispatch jihad delegations to the various provinces of Afghanistan. Each was ordinarily comprised of 10 members, and numerous delegation members were either

killed or captured. Those captured didn't come out of the terrible (Bouli) prison in Kabul until it fell into the hands of the mujahedin.

The Afghan Arabs' role did not end until Kabul's former regime, led by Najibullah, collapsed on 25 April 1992. Thus, the mission of the Arab volunteers ended and the Afghan Arabs, who exceeded 12,000 in number, began to consider returning to their countries, especially when the Pakistani Government began to sense the danger of their continued presence in its territories. When the Afghan Arabs began to return to their native countries, they took their battle weapons with them to be used against their societies and regimes. They also formed a class of graduates [veterans] who could train others in Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Yemen, and other countries.

As for Peshawar, it continues to be a permanent station for radical Islamic elements from other countries. There is no better proof of this than the fact that a delegation of [radical] leaders from these countries visited Peshawar while on their way to Kabul last March. Hasan al-Turabi himself has visited Peshawar frequently, and so has Rached Ghannouchi, leader of Tunisia's al-Nahdah [Ennahda] Party who lives in exile, and 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zindani, a fanatical religious leader of the Yemeni opposition.

Turning Point

After the collapse of Kabul's communist regime and the eruption of war among Afghan comrades in arms, numerous major financiers of activities of the Afghan Arabs, whose role had ended, began to lose their enthusiasm for the operation. Some of these financiers tried to mediate between Golbuddin Hekmatyar and Ahmad Shah Mas'ud to end the fighting. They emphasized their willingness to provide financing for reconstruction activities in Afghanistan. But when war persisted between the two sides, these mediation efforts were halted. At the same time, Afghan Arabs found that they no longer had a role in Afghanistan, especially with the decline of financial and armament activities. Consequently, some of them began to leave, either returning to their countries or crossing the borders into Pakistan. When Pakistan began to feel the danger of the presence of the remaining Afghan Arabs in Peshawar, it declared a few days ago that the mujahedin have to return to their countries now that the jihad has ended. Islamabad is now trying to shut this dossier for good.

Kabul Demands Their Deportation

The wish to get rid of the Afghan Arabs hasn't been confined to Pakistan but has crossed the border where Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani launched last week the first major attack of its kind against Arab volunteers. In his address following 'Id al-Fitr prayer, Rabbani demanded that they be kept away from the ongoing battles between Hekmatyar's forces and the government forces. He went as far as characterizing them as terrorist groups. Rabbani also urged Islamic

governments not to permit these people to go to Afghanistan. Moreover, he urged Hekmatyar specifically not to permit them to join the battle. Thus, the Afghan Arabs have come to represent a problem even to yesterday's allies in Afghanistan now that some of them have become involved in the ongoing conflict among the Afghan factions.

The question is: Will Pakistan continue to oust Afghan Arabs? Some people, relying on pressures exerted by some religious parties and groups at home, say that in light of the domestic struggle confronting Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's government, this government may not deport the remaining Afghan Arabs, who don't exceed 3,000 in number, from Peshawar.

But on the other hand, deportation of the Afghan Arabs could be the price for reduced U.S. pressure on Islamabad, especially pressure regarding the Pakistani nuclear program and the Kashmir issue. At the same time, such deportation may be the only way for Pakistan to eliminate any tension developing in its relations with the Arab countries to which these Afghan Arabs belong because of the presence of these Afghans in its territories. In any case, before making any judgments, one has to wait for matters to become clear regarding the final chapter of the issue of the "Afghan Arabs" in Peshawar.

Deficit, Poor Economy Depress Riyal

93LH0003A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 27 Apr 93 p 13

[Article by economist 'Afif 'Abdallah Ibrahim of the Yemen Ministry of Planning: "Budget Deficit, Deteriorating Economy Depress Yemeni Riyal Values"]

[Text] When South Yemen and North Yemen entered a union on 22 May 1990, the new state (The Republic of Yemen) inherited all the economic and fiscal problems that plagued its two components: declining national income growth rates, shrinking state foreign exchange revenues and especially of Yemeni expatriate remittances, heavy foreign obligations, high deficit ratios in general state budgets and balance of payments current accounts, and rising unemployment. The new state also inherited a large and underperforming public sector most of whose institutions are dependent on government subsidies and monopolistic practices.

The union created promising opportunities for better economic growth than was possible under the former separate condition because the national economy grew in size and became better able to deal with its problems and because its fiscal interrelationship with the outside world became more apparent. Yet, the government did not pay early enough attention to correcting those serious economic imbalances and did not react promptly and with flexibility to the external developments if faced. One such development was the Gulf crisis, which forced the return of the Yemeni expatriate labor force (about 750,000 workers) causing a considerable decline in their private foreign currency remittances as well as the loss of

loans and financial aid from Gulf governments and Funds as well as from certain Western countries.

Riyal price fluctuations have lately exceeded all expectations. The price of the riyal has not been stable for years, not even for a short while. The dollar was rated at 14 riyals on the eve of the union but is now valued at 46 riyals. The basic primary problem is that it has four exchange rates, of which three are official. The official rates are 12 riyals per dollar when calculating government receivables and payables such as its oil export revenues and external debt service; 16 riyals per dollar for imports of basic commodities such as sugar, rice, flour, and medicine; and the customs dollar rated at 18 riyals, which is used when computing customs duties on imports.

While official exchange rates have no basis in fact and merely reflect the state's desire to maintain the [riyal's] exchange rate above its true value, the riyal's [depressed value] on parallel markets has considerably eroded its purchasing power to the detriment of those with fixed or slow-rising incomes. The consequent suffering of the people may have been a major factor behind recent violent demonstrations in some Yemeni cities.

But the riyal's accelerated decline is caused by government persistence in expansionist [inflationary] fiscal policies that primarily focus on supplying its requirements as an institution. That caused a noticeable weakness in the general state budget as the fiscal deficit worsened from 11.6 billion riyals in 1990 to 22.5 billion riyals in 1992. The gap is forecast to further widen in 1993 to about 37.1 billion riyals or 25 percent of GDP at current prices.

By the same token, chronic government borrowing from the central bank has had an obvious inflationary impact on the money supply, causing it to grow at consistently higher rates (about 14 percent in 1992 and an estimated 30 percent in 1993). The proliferation of deficit financing has also aggravated the domestic general debt, which amounted by the end of 1992 to a very high 70 percent of GDP at current prices.

The decline in general economic growth and the substantial drop in GDP real growth for the third consecutive year since the union (25 percent in 1991 and an estimated 30 percent in 1992) as well as the decline in investment levels and in the growth rates of both imports and exports—all those factors propelled deficit borrowing by the government, widened the gap between the supply and demand of goods and services, and generated inflationary pressures that drove inflation rates to unprecedented records (40 percent in 1991 according to official figures and an estimated 65 percent in 1992).

The persistent balance of payments current accounts deficit is also contributing to such high rates [of inflation]. The general balance of payments position was a deficit of 1.7 billion riyals in 1990 and of 1.3 billion riyals in 1991. The general current accounts position is expected to further deteriorate in 1993 because of

intense pressures resulting from mounting deficit financing of foreign accounts and from shrinking government revenues from two major sources of foreign exchange—expatriate remittances and levies on oil prospecting and production (there are currently more than 31 active oil prospecting concessions to oil companies of which 14 were granted after the union). The trade balance is the principal reason for the current accounts deficit and represents, oil exports aside, about 35 percent of GDP [sentence as published]. This reflects the extent of structural imbalances that afflict the Yemeni economy.

In an attempt to contain sharp riyal exchange rate fluctuations and to regulate money-changing operations, prime minister's executive decree no. 280, "Regulating Money Changing Operations," was promulgated last year-end. Most of the regulations deal with procedures for the registration and licensisng of money changing activity. The regulations, although extremely concise, impose many restrictions and prohibitions and enjoin cambio operators [money changers] from initiating incoming or outgoing foreign transfers except as instructed by the central bank and with its prior approval. They are also required to sell to the central bank or to commercial banks all foreign exchange balances that exceed paid capital and reserves by the end of the workday each Thursday. It is to be noted that Article 15 relegates the setting of exchange rates not to financial markets but to banking authorities in conjunction with commercial bankers and cambio representatives. This decree is therefore believed to be inconsistent with the current strong propensity for economic liberalization and cannot be counted among monetary and fiscal reforms and solutions for the current critical economic position. The riyal remains inconvertible and [Yemeni] economic institutions are required to obtain advance permission and to endure a lot of administrative red tape before they can attend to their business abroad. Banking authorities are becoming increasingly aware of the need for riyal liberalization but their stringent restrictions, as evidenced by the new decree, are prompted by the sharp decline in and the instability of hard currency sources and by the depletion of the state's foreign currency holdings, which constrains the authorities from intervening to control sharp exchange rate fluctuations.

Certain Yemeni economists, whose opinions are shared and documented by some IMF economists on Yemen, believe in bolstering the trend to let market forces set riyal exchange rates, avert sharp price fluctuations, and establish fiscal stability. All this would mandate the government to take corrective economic steps to create a climate of stability conducive to the restoration of economic growth. Such steps would have to be adjunct to a general development plan and to a number of integrated short-term, and sometimes long-term, measures that include sufficient reduction of the state's general deficit to a level bearable to the national economy and commensurate with real national income growth. It is believed, therefore, that the deficit would not in most

NEAR EAST

JPRS-NEA-93-077

21 June 1993

cases have an adverse effect on other major economic components if it is kept at between 6 and 10 percent of Yemeni national income.

Budgetary items for 1993 leave a lot of leeway for certain selective trimming, especially of Capital and Current Transfers (15 billion ryals) and Defense and Security (26 billion ryals) which, when combined with military loans, account for 31 percent of national income at current prices. This is quite high in comparison with other countries of the world. Development allocations can also be trimmed, while maintaining their warranted importance, by redesigning the investment program and limiting it to infrastructure and other projects with quantifiable economic feasibility.

On the revenue side, such [mandated] measures must include reforming the tax system, combating widespread corruption in the tax apparatus, and improving the system's ability to levy and collect taxes as well as realize important tax revenues. The private sector currently enjoys advantages, incentives, facilities, and long-term exemptions that are comparable to those offered by Gulf countries but far exceed realized returns. The

modest taxes paid by the private sectors do not compare to the size of its contribution to national income.

Correcting the trade balance requires reevaluating government policies and relations with the outside world and especially with the Gulf states, with which relations deteriorated as a result of Gulf developments. The government must also cease short-term borrowing. The amount of such borrowing exceeded \$1 billion by the end of 1992 and its service has become burdensome to both the general budget and to the balance of payments.

Finally, in 1993 should the government fail to adhere to policies of fiscal stability and put spending rationalization policies high on its list of priorities, should it fail to relatively contain the budget deficit, and should domestic economic performance continue to deteriorate and state foreign exchange revenues continue to shrink—the possible outcomes of all that could be that the current accounts balance with the outside world would worsen, monetary expansion rates would exceed reasonable limits, and riyal prices would deteriorate on fiscal markets.

IRAN

New Border Passages To Aid in Return of Afghans

93LA0050D Tehran ABRAR in Persian 20 Apr 93 p 9

[Text] Mashhad. ABRAR Correspondent. In order to expedite the return of Afghan refugees, three new border passages were established in the province of Khorasan and the Province of Herat in Afghanistan.

Mohammadizadeh, the political-security deputy governor general of Khorasan, referred to this issue and pointed out: In order to expedite the departure of Afghan refugees, in addition to the "Dogharun" border, the three passages of "Yazdanabad," "Dokuhaneh," and "Mileh-ye 73" were established for the return of the Afghan refugees.

He also mentioned the establishment of a joint committee of the political and security officials of the province of Khorasan and the province of Herat of Afghanistan for informational and operational transactions to seriously deal with outlaws, fugitives, and the distribution of narcotics as another item in the above-mentioned agreements and added: The province of Khorasan announced its readiness in this regard to plant, cultivate, and harvest strategic products instead of poppies.

The political-security deputy governor general of Khorasan added: The exit of Afghan refugees from Iran has escalated. At the present time, only the Taybad border is full of applicants to enter Afghanistan, and it was decided in this connection that another Afghan airline flight would be added for this group, to expedite the rapid return of the refugees.

He added: The establishment of security on the joint border of Khorasan and Herat, sending first- and second-rank border patrols for a maximum of one month, and also activating the border guard stations are among the other steps taken in the above-mentioned committee.

In continuation, he announced the readiness of the Islamic Republic of Iran to revitalize and reconstruct agriculture and also carry out research and study projects in the province of Herat. He added: Training technical manpower, establishing cultural centers, putting together exhibitions of books and films, sending books and publications, and sending professors for Afghan students, as well as propagation, which have been requested by the Afghan side, have been accepted by the Iranian delegation.

Move To Prevent Further Technology Bans Reported

93AS0788A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 28 Apr 93 p 2

[Article: "Iranian Diplomatic Campaign to Avoid More Economic Sanctions"]

[Text] Iran has begun an intensive diplomatic campaign to gain the support of France and Germany in avoiding further economic sanctions.

This Iranian step comes at least a week before the scheduled date for the meeting of the committee of experts from the seven major industrialized nations to adopt the final measures required to retard the Iranian military buildup.

This meeting will be attended by senior officials from the United States, Canada, Britain, France, Italy, Japan, and Germany to impose restrictions on exporting a broad group of products that could have dual uses, i.e., for both civilian and military purposes.

Iranian experts say that if those restrictions are, in fact, applied, a major segment of Iranian industry will probably have to shut down completely because it lacks the required spare parts and technology.

Tehran assumes that Germany and France will probably oppose such measures.

The United States has taken the strongest stand, after the Clinton administration took office. Britain has also announced that there would be no normalization of relations until the Khomeyni edict that condemns the writer Salman Rushdie to death is rescinded.

It is certain that Canada, which is closely linked by strong relations with the United States, will be committed to Washington's plan. Moreover, Japan has decreased its imports of Iranian oil and has imposed very stiff restrictions on exports to Iran, for financial reasons.

Finally, the thinking is that Italy will be unable to pursue a private policy because of its current governmental crisis.

The seven nations provide 80 percent of Iran's imports, as well as purchase about half its oil.

The Iranian delegation in Germany is headed by Hasan Rouhani, the secretary general of the Supreme Security Council and chairman of the Majlis' Foreign Affairs Committee. The delegation in Paris is headed by Mohammad Va'zi, the Iranian deputy foreign minister.

In Bonn, Rouhani has given assurances that Iran will not take part in terrorist operations on German soil. He also promised to release the German businessman, Helmut Szimkus, who has been imprisoned in Tehran since he was abducted from his home last year and sentenced to death on a charge of spying for Iraq.

It is expected that Va'zi will promise full cooperation with French investigations into a series of assassination attempts which, it is said, were carried out by Iranian agents. These incidents include the murder of a former prime minister under the shah, Shahpour Bakhtiar.

Tractor Production Talks Held With Austrian Firm

93LA0050C Tehran ABRAR in Persian 21 Apr 93 p 4

[Text] Vienna. IRNA. The study of the possibility of the production of a new kind of tractor in Iran and the transfer of technical knowledge and other secondary cooperations were the subject of talks on Monday between Engineer Safari, the Iranian ambassador to Austria, and Dr. Rudolph Streicher, the director of the government "Steier" Company of that country.

In these talks, it was decided that in order to implement this plan, Dr. Streicher will visit the Islamic Republic of Iran in the near future, and the grounds for further cooperation will be studied.

Dr. Streicher, the former minister of transport and nationalized industries of Austria, has been the director of the "Steier" Company, which is the most important industry of this country in the area of tractor and vehicle production and is of world renown, since a few months ago.

Group Formed To Study Natural Gas Sales to Europe

93LA0050B Tehran ABRAR in Persian 20 Apr 93 p 4

[Text] Economic Service. Considering the interest of the European Natural Gas Company in receiving natural gas from the Islamic Republic of Iran, on 12 Farvardin 1372, equivalent to 1 Apr 1993, a group was formed to study and design the technical, commercial, legal, and financial framework of a plan that will result in the above-mentioned objective.

According to a report by the Public Relations Office of the Iranian Natural Gas Company, the above-mentioned group is the "European-Iran Natural Gas," comprised of the Iranian National Natural Gas Company, the French Natural Gas Company (as a partner company), Ruhr Gas Company of Germany, OMV of Austria, Ana Gas of Spain, CPP of the Czech Republic, and SPP of the Slovak Republic. This proposal is for preliminary study, which includes various choices of natural gas transportation via pipelines and liquid natural gas.

It is noteworthy that the above-mentioned report was made available to the news agencies of the above-mentioned countries simultaneously at 1200 yesterday by all the European partners.

Martyrs' Investment Company Activities Detailed

93LA0052B Tehran ABRAR in Persian 22 Apr 93 p 4

[Interview with Mohammad Mir Mohammad Sadeqi, general manager of the Shahed Investment Company, by IRNA on 21 Apr 93; place not given]

[Text] The Shahed Investment Company, with shares belonging to 150,000 children of martyrs and nominal

investments amounting to 74 billion rials [Rls], prevents the effects of inflation on the funds of the children of martyrs.

Mohammad Mir Mohammad Sadeqi, the general manager of the Shahed Investment Company, made this announcement yesterday in an interview with IRNA and said: Investment in this company, calculating the financial resources and facilities absorbed from banks, amounts to Rls90 billion, which have been invested in the commercial, production, industrial, agricultural, developmental, and construction divisions and the provincial Shahed Company.

He explained that, in terms of the evaluation of the properties of the Shahed Investment Company, the actual value of the investments of the company is at least Rls200 billion.

He mentioned most of the investments of the Shahed Company as being in the commercial sector and added: Exports of hides, salambor, raisins, carpets, saffron, fruit, and dried goods are valued at \$6 million. Last year, imports of ironware, melamine powder, oil, sugar, and medical equipment, at a value of \$10 million in 1371 [21 Mar 1992-20 Mar 1993], and the absorption of \$4 million by stores at the exit points of the country, and their absorption of domestic factories, are among the activities of the commercial sector of this company.

Pointing out that with the change in the economic policies of the country, the volume of work of the exit stores of the Shahed Investment Company has decreased, he announced that through these stores, \$150 million in foreign currency has been absorbed from passengers going abroad up to 1367 [21 Mar 1988-20 Mar 1989].

He mentioned investments by the Shahed Company in development in 1371 as more than Rls10 billion and said: The largest commercial-residential building, called "Asman," which is 33 stories high, is being built on Dr. Shari'ati Street under the supervision of Iranian experts and by this company, and will be operational in the next three years.

Mir Mohammad Sadeqi stated that the activities of the industrial division of the Shahed Investment Company, with 40 industrial projects, are concentrated in 21 affiliated companies. He also stated that the rial needs for these projects at the previous government foreign currency rate are for Rls122 billion, with \$132 million in foreign currency.

He mentioned some of these projects as gunnysack weaving, making eyeglass frames, the production of various kinds of milking devices, unbaked bricks, dairy production, and cheese manufacturing.

The general manager of the Shahed Investment Company in continuation pointed out that this company, from 1364 [21 Mar 1985-20 Mar 1986] to the end of 1370 [20 Mar 1992], has had a profit of

Rls57,018,000,000. He said: On the profit resulting from the activities of the company, a total of Rls11 billion in taxes have been paid to the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance.

He added: The creation of a single foreign currency rate will decrease the investment profit of the commercial division of the Shahed Investment Company. In the industries division of this company also, in the short and medium term, there will be problems. In order to eliminate these problems, it is necessary for the Central Bank to open a fund with a maximum of 10 to 20 percent and facilities based on an open foreign currency rate.

He emphasized that if this action is not taken by the banks, all national industries will suffer losses.

Mohammad Mir Mohammad Sadeqi, in the conclusion of this interview, pointed out that the Shahed Investment Company is trying to find new economic grounds to be able to make a reasonable and routine profit for the investments of the children of martyrs and asked for the help of the officials in achieving this important goal.

Central Bank To Control All Imports

93LA0052A Tehran ABRAR in Persian 24 Apr 93 p 4

[Text] Tehran. IRNA. The Central Bank on Wednesday announced in a communique that all Iranian importers must from now on purchase the foreign currency they need from the national banks.

According to a report by the French news agency from Tehran, observers believe that this decision, which strengthens the control of the Central Bank over imports, should decrease the importance of the role and influence of the private foreign currency market. This market, which is considered legal in Iran, has been somewhat turbulent in recent weeks.

The communique of the Central Bank indicates that from 24 Farvardin [13 Apr] imports without the transfer of foreign currency will only be permissible through the purchase of the needed foreign currency from one of the Iranian banks.

The communique emphasizes that imported goods shall be released only with the presentation of verification of the receipt of foreign currency from a bank.

According to experts, thus far, a significant portion of those goods in high demand, and sometimes industrial equipment, have been imported into the country through the open market, which is more rapid and less susceptible than official banks to bureaucratic procedures, and determining the amount of such imports has been very difficult.

The decision of the Central Bank provides the monetary authorities of Iran with almost complete control over national imports. Lack of control over imports in the past three years had caused a severe crisis in Iran since the middle of the last Christian year. According to

Western experts, Iran, whose annual foreign currency revenues by no means exceed \$18 billion, in 1991, by continually resorting to letters of credit, had \$28 billion in imports of goods and services. This country, which has not been able to meet all its obligations, since last summer had \$7 to 8 million in unpaid notes to creditors. This figure will increase even more by next summer. This situation in the past few months caused the trade relations of Iran with its foreign partners to crumble, and the Central Bank itself seriously decreased grants of foreign currency to importers.

The decision of the Central Bank was also a severe blow to the free money market. This market in the past few months, with the reluctance of the monetary authorities to make foreign currency available through the official banks and because of the floating foreign currency rate since 1 Farvardin [21 Mar], had become increasingly important.

The great demand on this market last week caused the increase in the price of major foreign currencies and forced the Central Bank to decrease the rate of the rial about 8 percent.

This small monetary crisis generated criticism of conservative and radical political circles as a result of the government's economic reform policy.

New Tehran Construction Jihad Officials Named

93LA0052C Tehran ABRAR in Persian 27 Apr 93 p 4

[Text] Economic Service. With the issuance of decrees by Karam'ali Bakhtiarifar, the director of the Construction Jihad Organization of Tehran Province, the new officials of various sections of this organization were appointed.

In accordance with decrees issued, the following appointments were made: Abolfazl Kolhar, financial administrative deputy; Morteza 'Abdol'ali, rural development and industries deputy; Mohsen Bigdeli, education and research deputy; Mohammad Hoseyn Amini-Qaraguzlu, financial affairs manager; Mohammad 'Ali Haftkhanegi, director of projects and plans; Naser Soltanian, director of propagation and people's participation; 'Ali 'Abbasi, director of logistics and machinery affairs; 'Ali Reza Zavvareh'i, director of inspections and complaint office; and Khan'ali Hojjati, director of the Public Relations Office.

According to a report by the Public Relations Office of the Construction Jihad Organization of Tehran Province, in separate decrees, Hoseyn Baqa'i, Hasan Akhtari, Seyyed Hoseyn Mohseni, Seyyed Reza Mo'meni, and Ya'qub Shafi'i were appointed directors of the Construction Jihad offices of the cities of Karaj, Savojbelagh, Shahriar, Shahr-e Rey, and Varamin.

SOUTH ASIA

Reporters Expelled From Construction Jihad Meeting

93LA0050A Tehran ABRAR in Persian 21 Apr 93 p 9

[Text] Arak. Despite the official invitation to reporters to cover the news of the meeting of the officials of the Construction Jihad of Central Province, they were asked to leave the meeting.

When an employee of the Construction Jihad of Arak noticed that reporters were writing down the statements of the deputy minister for financial and administrative affairs of the Construction Jihad, without prior warning, he asked them to leave the meeting.

He also intended to prevent the entry of the reporters to the location of a television interview with Sadrossadat, the deputy minister of the Construction Jihad. The problem was resolved with the mediation of the public relations director of the Construction Jihad.

Decrease in Sistan Va Baluchestan Births Reported

93LA0052D Tehran ABRAR in Persian 22 Apr 93 p 9

[Text] Zahedan. IRNA. With the implementation of the planned parenthood and population control programs in the province of Sistan and Baluchestan, the birthrate last year decreased by 31.5 percent compared to a similar period in the previous year.

Ranjbar, the director general of the Office of Registration and Records of the province of Sistan and Baluchestan, made this announcement and said that last year there were 43,331 births in the province, whereas in 1370 [21 Mar 1991-20 Mar 1992], 56,945 births were registered.

He added: The offices of official documents and marriage registration last year registered 6,207 marriages, which compared to 1370 shows an increase of about 7.5 percent.

Also, 313 divorces were registered last year, and 310 in 1370.

He added: With the use of expert forces this year, the information for 1371 [21 Mar 1992-20 Mar 1993] will be fed to the computers, and at the end of this year, with the start of the operations of the population data base, each member of the society will be given a national code.

He added: The automation project of the offices of registration and records is under way, which will be put into operation first in Zahedan and then gradually in other areas of the province.

Measures Needed To Curb Environmental Offenders

93LA0052E Tehran ABRAR in Persian 22 Apr 93 p 9

[Text] In order to preserve and protect the valuable natural resources of our country, it is necessary to deal decisively with violators of the natural resources laws.

The director of the Office of Natural Resources of the city of Dezful, in an interview with IRNA reporter, made this announcement and said: One of the great problems in protecting natural resources is indecisiveness in examining violations. To prevent the increase of violations and the insolence of profiteering individuals, he emphasized the necessity of establishing special courts and also the reestablishment of a forest guard.

The head of the office of natural resources of the city of Dezful referred to in the mountainous and hard access of the Sardasht region of Dezful, where various trees grow and also green pastures exist, and said: Due to the lack of sufficient forces and needed resources, the valuable trees of the region, such as the old "oat" trees, are cut down and taken away by profiteering individuals.

Stating that in 1371 only 125,000 tomans in fines was collected from profiteering individuals who destroy the natural resources, he said: They are fined 30,000 rials for every hectare they destroy, whereas the approximate value of every hectare is more than a million rials.

In conclusion, the head of the Office of Natural Resources of the City of Dezful asked for an increase in fines in order to reduce the destruction of natural resources.

Morphine Seized in Yazd

93LA0050H Tehran ABRAR in Persian 26 Apr 93 p 10

[Text] Yazd. ABRAR Correspondent. With the efforts of the security officials of Yazd, a cargo of 2,500 kg of morphine was discovered and seized.

According to a report by our correspondent, General Japoli, the commander of the security forces of Yazd, made this announcement and said: This cargo was hidden in the body of a trailer and was discovered during its passage through the province of Yazd by the Special Unit of this force. In this connection, nine persons were arrested and sent to the judicial authorities.

Explaining last year's activities of this force in fighting narcotics, he said: 8,771 kg of morphine; 2,540 kg of opium, opium extract, and hashish; and 8 kg of marijuana were seized from smugglers last year.

He added: This amount of narcotics was obtained from three international caravans and 2,164 smugglers, and 174 addicts were arrested and sent to the judicial authorities.

He also mentioned the discovery and confiscation of 1,939 video players, 128,526 video tapes, 39 movie

cameras, 40 hunting rifles, and 2,060 wireless radios, among the other activities of this force last year.

Drug Smugglers Account for 65 Percent of Prisoners

93LA0050G Tehran ABRAR in Persian 24 Apr 93 p 9

[Text] Because of the number of international narcotics smuggling caravans and the effective fight against smugglers, at the present, 50 to 65 percent of people in prisons are there in connection with the smuggling, transportation, distribution, and possession of narcotics.

According to a report by IRNA, Hojjat ol-Eslam Shushtari, the minister of justice, who had traveled to Yazd to study the judicial problems and issues, made this statement in a gathering of judges and Justice Department employees of this province and emphasized the decisive and unmerciful fight against the dealers of death.

He said: More than 80 billion rials [Rls] in funds this year were allocated to the judicial organizations of the country. This figure shows an increase of 60 percent compared to the previous year.

Of this amount, Rls90 billion are current funds and Rls18 billion are developmental budget. [sentence as published]

The minister of justice added: Using the developmental funds, more than 70 projects are under construction this year. Considering the volume of work in the judicial organization, there is need for more funds.

Referring to the effect of the implementation of Islamic laws in decreasing the crime rate, he said: Since the victory of the Islamic revolution, the statistics on many crimes in our country compared to other countries have decreased significantly.

According to this report, the new building of the Legal Court 2 of Bafed was inaugurated in the presence of Hojjat ol-Eslam Shushtari, the minister of justice, and began operations.

This building, which has 1,300 square meters under construction, was built with Rls135 million in funds on 3,500 square meters of land.

Opium Seized in Qazvin Totals 3.5 Kg

93LA0050I Tehran ABRAR in Persian 26 Apr 93 p 10

[Text] Qazvin. ABRAR Correspondent. With the efforts of the officials of the antinarcotics office of Qazvin Security Force, 3.5 kg of opium were discovered.

According to a report by the information deputy of the Qazvin Security Region, officials, while inspecting public places, also discovered 8 video tapes, 120 audio tapes, 46 records, and a video player from the Audio-Visual Guild Unit of Milad and the Vali-ye 'Asr bath house.

The accused were sent along with the completed file to the Anti-Social Corruption Office.

Industrial Installations Polluting Gachsaran

93LA0050F Tehran ABRAR in Persian 26 Apr 93 p 10

[Text] Gachsaran. IRNA. Smoke from the activities of the industrial installation of the oil-producing regions has polluted this city in the past three days.

Engineer Ayaz Mahmudi, the director general of Environmental Protection of the province of Kohkiluyeh and Boyer Ahmad, said: The increase in the level of concentration of this pollution is the result of increased activity of the oil and natural gas wells.

He added: The advance of this mass of air to the northern regions will have an undesirable effect on the agricultural products, forests, plants, and agricultural lands of this city.

He considered the spread of respiratory ailments, seasonal allergies, increased humidity, and acid rain among the symptoms of this pollution.

Eng. Mahmudi pointed out: Steps will be taken in the Second Economic Plan to prevent the escape of gases from the incomplete burning of oil wells, including hydrogen, carbon monoxide, and carbon dioxide.

Martyr Foundation Pharmacies Lack Adequate Supplies

93LA0050E Tehran ABRAR in Persian 21 Apr 93 p 3

[Interview with Ms. Fatemeh Karube, director of the Medical Center and treatment and pharmaceutical deputy director of the Shahid Foundation, by IRNA; place and date not given]

[Text] Tehran. IRNA. Failure to deliver 170 pharmaceutical items needed by the Shahid Foundation pharmacies and the failure to deliver 30 pharmaceutical items at a very limited level by the pharmaceutical officials of the country have created many problems for the pharmacies and their customers.

Ms. Fatemeh Karube, the director of the Medical Center and treatment and pharmaceutical deputy director of the Shahid Foundation, made the statement in an exclusive interview with IRNA and added: The pharmacies of the Shahid Foundation have been visited by 7 million customers; but, unfortunately, due to the shortage of 170 needed pharmaceutical items, the managers of the pharmacies have to tell the customers that they do not have the drugs they need, and they must go to the special pharmacies to get their drugs.

The head of the Medical Center of the Shahid Foundation also added: Despite the problems created due to delays in carrying out the financial commitments of the two agencies, that is, Social Security and Treatment Services for the Medical Center, this center has been able to sign treatment contracts with 38 different organizations and institutions, and at the present time, these organizations, making use of various insurance policies, use the treatment and medical resources of the Shahid Foundation.